

NOTES,
HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL
ON THE
Church of St. John the Evangelist,
SLYMBRIDGE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE,

WITH
SOME REMARKS ON DECORATIVE COLOURING.

By WILLIAM STRONG, ESQ.



BRISTOL,
WILLIAM STRONG:
JAMES BURNS, PORTMAN STREET, LONDON
J. H. PARKER, OXFORD: T. STEVENSON, CAMBRIDGE.

MDCCCXLV.



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Dilexi Decorem Domus Tue.



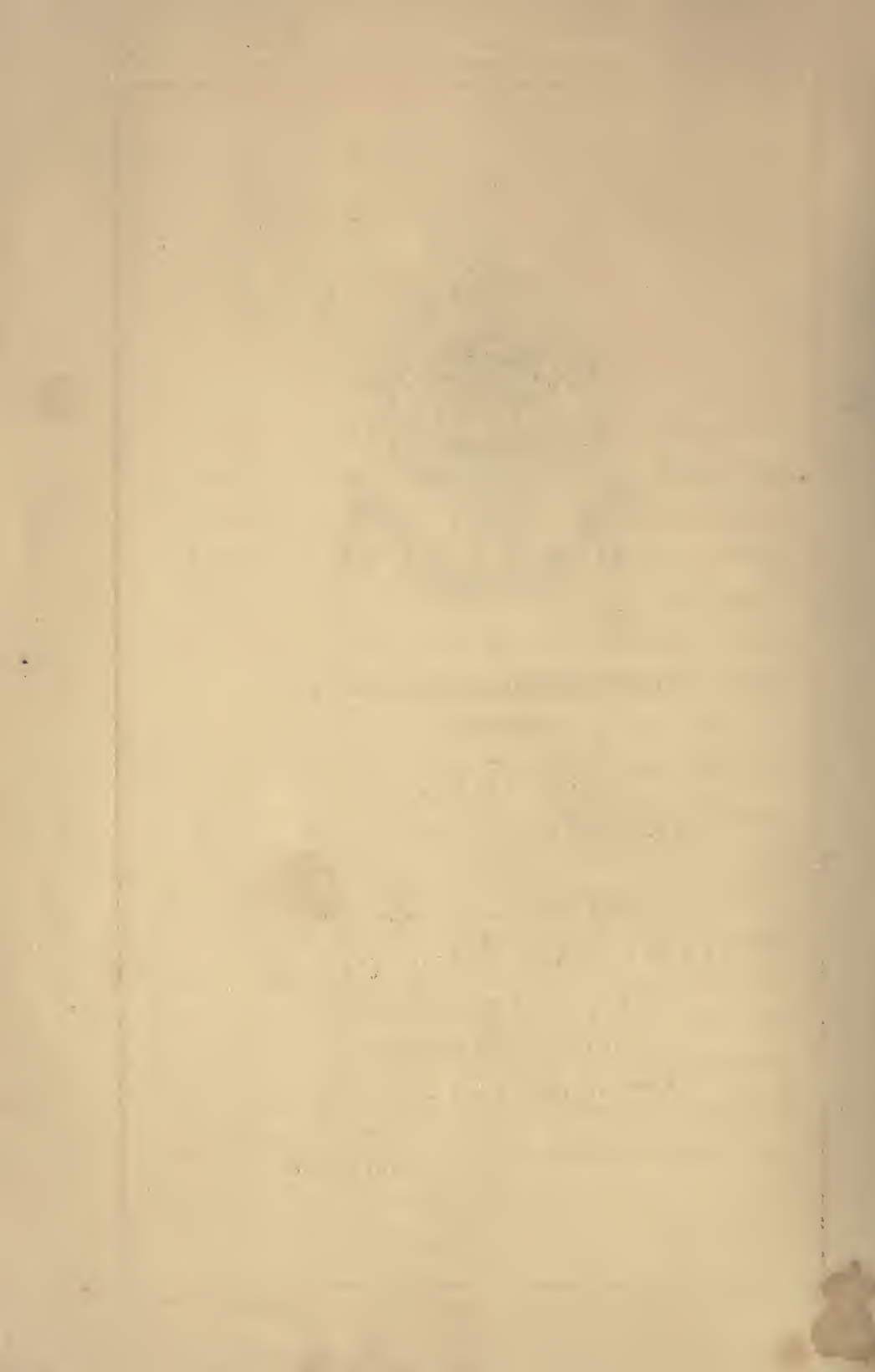
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OXFORD :
PRINTED BY J. SHRIMPTON.



TO
THE REVEREND DOCTOR ROUTH,
PRESIDENT,
AND
THE FELLOWS
OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE COLLEGE,
OXFORD,
THE FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATED ACCOUNT
OF ONE AMONGST THE FIRST CHURCHES
OF WHICH THEY WERE THE PATRONS
IS BY THEIR KIND PERMISSION
MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY
THE EDITORS.



ADVERTISEMENT.

WITH regard to the Editorship of the following work, it is only necessary to state, that the drawings have been made by Francis Niblett, Architect, of Haresfield, Gloucestershire, a member of the Bristol and West of England Architectural Society; and that the letter-press has been compiled by another member of the same Society, who is wholly responsible for any opinions contained in the work.

A notion has got abroad that the object of the following publication was to raise funds by the sale of the book for the restoration of the Church. The Editor begs to state, that such was not the case. The legitimate object was, to illustrate a Church possessing singular beauties, for the encouragement and extension of Church Architecture, as has been done by other Architectural Societies. Those who have been engaged in similar undertakings are well aware that the expense of getting up a work in such style as the following, leaves no probability of *any profits* arising from it, and all others who may become purchasers of this one, are assured that the price is fixed according to the usual value of books, and not with the idea of any surplus being paid for what is miscalled charity.

Nor is there any principle which the Editor would more strongly condemn than that of either writing a book, or doing any thing of the kind for charity, or allowing people to suppose that they are doing a charitable act when they are receiving more than the full value of their money.

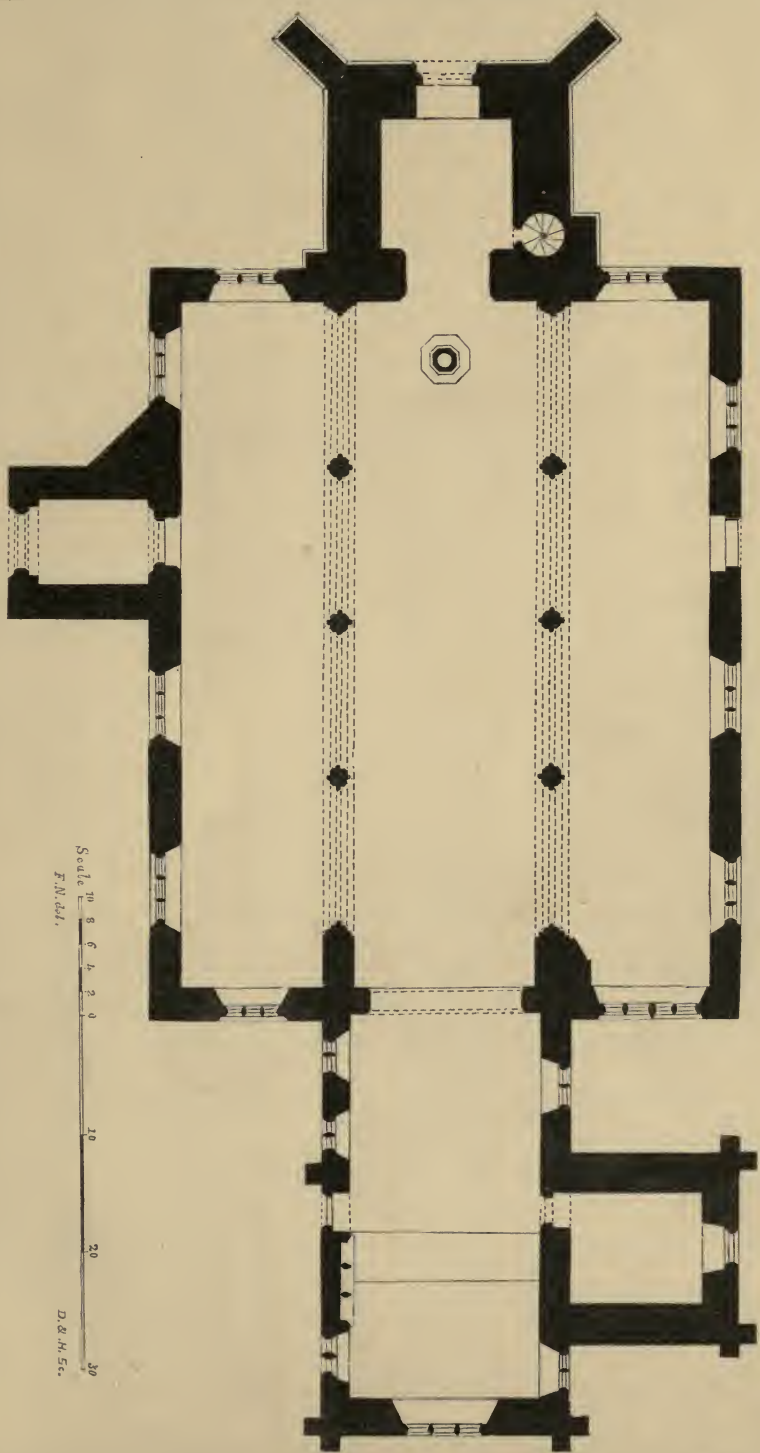
Should any one, from the account here given, be induced to aid by their contributions in completing the restoration of the Church, any sums, forwarded through the Publishers to Mr. Strong, Bristol, will be acknowledged with all due gratitude by those to whom the care of the Church is at present committed.

An apology is due to the friends of the undertaking for the delay which has taken place in the publication of the work ; but those only who have been engaged in similar ones, are aware of the immense labour of collecting such materials, and the tediousness of the process of preparing them for publication.

To those persons who have kindly forwarded this part of the work, either by allowing access to books and documents under their charge, or by personally assisting the Editor in arranging the materials so collected, he here begs to tender his most grateful acknowledgments. His own feelings would prompt him to record their names, but as some of them would disapprove of their names appearing in print, he is compelled to withhold them all.

MEASUREMENTS.

	FT.	IN.		FT.	IN.
Chancel	32	10	long by	16	4 wide.
Height of north and south walls of do.	15	0			
Vestry	9	10	long by	11	8 wide.
Vestry and Priests' Door	7	3	high by	3	2 wide.
Sedilia	6	2	high by	6	9 wide.
Nave Arch	20	0	high by	13	7 wide.
Nave	58	2	long by	18	3 wide.
Height of Nave to wall-plate	33	0			
Ditto to ridge of roof	37	0			
Pier Arches	13	3	high by	11	6 wide.
Tower or Western Arch	22	5	high by	8	0 wide.
North Aisle, from floor to wall-plate	18	6	high.		
North and South Aisle	58	2	long by	13	3 wide.
South Aisle, from floor to wall-plate	17	4	high.		
South Porch	7	10	long by	8	6 wide.
South Doorway	6	10	high by	4	1 wide.
Tower	11	11	long by	11	11 wide.







Violet del.

C. B. Smith sculp.

OLYMBRIDGE CHURCH.

FROM THE SOUTH EAST.

PARKER OXFORD 1846.

PARISH OF SLYMBRIDGE.

THE Parish of Slymbridge lies in the Hundred of Berkeley, four miles distant north from Berkeley, four miles north-west from Dursley, and eleven miles south of Gloucester. It is washed on the north-west by the river Severn, and the Gloucester and Bristol turnpike-road passes through it in one of its hamlets called Cambridge. The Bristol and Gloucester railroad also passes through it. It is in the Archdeaconry of Gloucester and Deanery of Dursley.

HAMLETS.—It contained, according to the statement of Sir Robert Atkyns, the hamlets of—1. Hurst; 2. Sages; 3. Churchend; 4. Moorend; 5. Gossington; 6. Kingston; 7. Slymbridge Street; 8. Cambridge. At present the name of Sages is only known as coupled with Hurst. The names of the other hamlets still remain, the most considerable of them being Cambridge, Gossington, and Hurst: at Cambridge are the greatest number of houses together.

VILLAGE.—The part of the parish lying immediately round the Church is denominated Churchend, and contains a few detached houses and cottages, which may be termed the Village.

POPULATION.—The parish contains 3,402 acres; and by the census of 1841, 444 males and 421 females, making a

total of 865 people. In 1831, the population was 923; in 1821, 807; in 1811, 794; in 1801, 770.

NEW GROUNDS.—A considerable quantity of land is annually being reclaimed from the Severn, adjoining what are called the New Grounds. The whole of the warth has been recovered from the Severn; and a jury found (18th Hen. III.) that the river washed away the land at Slimbridge, first to Awre on the opposite side, and then rewashed it to Slimbridge. Fosbroke, in his History of Gloucestershire, mentions that a suit was instituted in the Exchequer by the first Charles against the Berkeleys respecting this warth, which ended in favour of the Berkeleys. His information is acquired from Mr. Smythe's MSS.

NAME.—The name of the parish in the Domesday Book is Heslinbruge, and has been variously written Slimbruge, Slimbrug, Slimbridge, and Slymbridge. The origin of the name must be left to those learned in such matters to determine.

Fuller in his "Worthies," p. 349, speaks thus of the fertility of the parish: "As for pasturage, I have heard it reported from credible persons, that such is the fruitfulness of the land nigh Slimbridge, that in spring time, let it be bit bare to the roots, a wand laid along therein over night will be covered with new grown grasse by the next morning." On this being told to King James I., he replied, that he knew a field in Scotland, where, if a horse was turned in on a Sunday it would be in vain to look for him the next day. Mr. Smythe, in his MSS. says, that Thomas (second) Lord Berkeley, gathered from the two orchards of Slimbridge and Hurst farms fourscore quarters of apples and pears in the year, "where now scarce two trees doe remayne." The parish still retains its fertility, and is also famous, as of old, for its cider.

Camden, in his Britannia, (Gough edit.) p. 262, relates

“That at the bridge at Cambridge the Danes having passed in exact order, (*ordine literato*,) (as Ethelwerd writes,) loaded with spoil, were encountered in a bloody battle by the West Saxons and Mercians, in Wooddnesfield, where were slain 3 of their petty princes, Healfden, Cinvill, and Inquar.” Fosbroke however in his Gloucestershire, p. 444, attributes this story to Quatbridge, near Bridgenorth.

The Reeves and Baylyes of Thomas (second) Lord Berkeley's manors complained that the “Earl of Lancaster's men, as they travelled with the Queen (Isabel of Second Edward) through the manors of Slimbridge and Hurst to Berkeley, and from thence to Bristol, took away with them their hens, geese, ducks, and other pultry, whereby they lost all their eggs and breed for this yere—and how their horses eat their oats and hay, took away their saddles, and brake their Chapel or Oratory doore which cost *iiii*^d the mendinge.” This, it would seem, must have been the Church door, as there is no account of the existence or foundation of any Chapel or Chantry till 17 Edward III.

In the 20th Edward II. the Parson of Slimbridge presented Eudo de Berkeley, fourth son of Maurice (third of that name) Lord Berkeley, who was bred at Oxford, with a boar, which in feeding had eaten one quarter and two bushels of beans^a.

In the 6th Richard II. the hounds ate at Hurst 18 quarters of barley and oats^b.

MANOR.—There is express mention in the Domesday Book (folio 163) of Gossington, Hurst, and Slymbridge being members of the Berkeley manor.

Terra Regis. Rex Edwardus. In Gosintune *iiii* hidæ. Hæc supradicta membra omnia pertinent ad Berchelai.

Ipse Rogerius habet de terrâ hujus manerii in Heslinbruge i hid. ad Hirslege i hid.”

^a Fosbroke's Berkeley, p. 122.

^b Ibid., p. 146.

Robert Fitzhardinge died seized of Gossington and Hurst^c, and all descended to Maurice his son.

Henry II., in return for Robert Fitzhardinge's services, conferred on him and his heirs the barony of Berkeley, which Roger de Berkeley, baron of Dursley, held of the king in fee farm, but which the king confiscated because Roger took part with Stephen. But the king Henry afterwards gave the barony of Dursley to Roger de Berkeley as his own inheritance. And the said Roger so harassed Sir Robert Fitzhardinge that he came to the king, and prayed him to resume his gift. Whereupon King Henry made a peace and concord between them, so that the said Roger should give his daughter Alice to wife unto Maurice the son and heir of Sir Robert Fitzhardinge, with the town of Slimebrigge, then called "Ten poundis worth of land^d."

"This byn the covenantys that were made atwixt Sir Robert Fitzherdinge, lord and baron of Berkeley, and Sir Roger of Berkeley, lord and baron of Dursly, and in the house of Robert Fitzherding, at Bristowe, and in the presence of kinge Stevin and of Harry then duke of Normandy and earle of Angewe, and by his assent and in the presence of many others both clarkes and laymen: Morrice the son and heir of Sir Robert Fitzhardinge shall take to wife Alice, &c. &c."^e For the rest of this interesting covenant the reader must be referred to "Abbat Newland's Roll," a document only to be found in the Evidence House of Berkeley Castle, to which the Editor regrets that access was found impossible. It is also referred to in Seyer's Bristol, vol. i. cap. viii. § 92.

Smythe relates^f that this Alice wife of Lord Maurice, gave to Elia, son of Toky, her nurse, a messuage and half a yard land in Slimbridge, in fee simple, and to have her grist ground

^c MS., Berkeley, p. 96.

^d Berkeley MS., p. 7.

^e Smythe's Lives of Berkeleys.

^f Fosbroke's Berkeley, p. 83.

toll free at her mill there next after her own corne that should be upon the mill grinding^g.

And she gave her manor of Slimbridge to Robert her son during her life time, "lest her mind should alter^h."

After the death of Robert (third of that name) Lord Berkeley, Lucy, his widow, obtained from the king's councils the manors of Wotton, Slimbridge, and Bedminster, for her sustenance, till the heir had seisin of his lands, and could assign dower; which not long after he had at the assizes at Gloucester, 5 Hen. III., 1221ⁱ.

Maurice (second) Lord Berkeley died seized of Slimbrugge 9 Edward I., 1281.

MANOR HOUSE.—Thomas (second of name) Lord Berkeley, on his journey from Berkeley towards the siege of Barwick, and wars with Scotland, 25 Edward I., 1297, lay the first night at his manor house of Slimbridge, five miles off, and took from thence with him 41 bushels of oats for his horses' provender, to save the expenses of his purse on his next night's lodging at Worcester^k.

Thomas (third of name) Lord Berkeley, 23 Edward III., 1349, levied a fine of lands to William Side, and other of his chaplains and servants of his castle and manor of Slimbridge^l.

The Lords Berkeley successively died seized of Slimbridge manor till the 5th Henry V., 1417.

But in 35 Henry VI., 1457, Sir Edward Ingoldsthorp was seized of Slimbridge.

Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, (who died 1439,) married Elizabeth, only child of Thomas (fourth) Lord Berkeley, and became possessed of the manor of Slimbridge.

In 7 Edward IV., 1467, Margaret, countess of Shrewsbury,

^g MS. 113.

^k Ibid., p. 108.

^h Ibid.

^l Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i. p. 359.

ⁱ Fosbroke's Berkeley, p. 91.

wife of John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, (celebrated by Shakespeare,) daughter of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and of Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas (fourth of name) Lord Berkeley, died seized of Slimbridge, Gossington, Hurst, and Cambridge.

William Lord Berkeley, as Earl Notingham, levied a fine of lands in Slimbridge to Edward Willoughby and Robert Legg, 3 Hen. VII., 1488, that he might convey them to Henry VII., for want of issue of his own body. He also conveyed this manor, with eleven others, and three advowsons, to King Henry VII., and his heirs male, to be made a Marquis. It appears however by Dugdale's Baronage^m, that Maurice (fifth of name) Lord Berkeley, not inheriting from the Marquis, recovered the manor of Sages, lying in the parish of Slynbrigge, so passed by fine to Henry VII.,ⁿ and Thomas (fifth) Lord Berkeley, died seized of Sages, 24 Henry VIII., 1533.

On the death of Edward VI., the last of Henry's heirs, this manor, with the others, reverted to the Lords of Berkeley, and Henry Lord Berkeley had livery of it granted him 1 Mary, and it has continued ever since with the Lords of Berkeley.

PROPERTY OF RELIGIOUS.—Gossington was parcel of the Berkeley Nunnery before the Conquest, and in most part devolving on the Dursley Berkeleys (whose share was given by Robert Lord Berkeley, of the Berkeley family, temp. Henry II., which Robert had it, with other estates of the Dursley family, to William his fourth son), and Engelwald de Gossington, whose estate devolving to John son of Roger de Gossington, he sold it to the Berkeleys, and it is described in the Inquisitio 17 Henry VI. and 7 Edward IV., No. 44, as a messuage and half virgate, lately held by William Mann: Maurice (fourth of name) Lord Berkeley purchased other lands of John son of Odo de Acton; the manor or farm being

^m Vol. i. p. 366.

ⁿ Ex Autog. in Castro de Berkeley.

alienated to Godfrey Gouldsberrow, bishop of Gloucester, who died 2 James I. John Smythe, of Nibley, purchased it of John Gouldsberrow, and parcelled it out in 1618°.

Slimbridge wharf did belong to the Abbey of St. Austin's, Bristol; it was given to that Abbey by the ancestor of the Berkeley family, and after the dissolution of religious foundations, it was granted to the bishopric of Bristol, 34 Henry VIII.^p

Thomas (first of name) Lord Berkeley gave to the Abbey^q of Kingswood certain lands in Slimbrigge^r for the maintenance of certain lights to burn before the images of our Lady and St. Catherine, in the Chantry there.

Sir William Kingston, Knight, upon payment of £20. clear annual value, obtained from Henry VIII. among other possessions of the Priory of Stanley St. Leonard, lands in Slymbryge, for sixty years^s.

The assessed rents of free and customary tenants of the Priory of Stanley St. Leonard, in Slymbryge, were £2. 6s. 8d^t.

Lands in Slymbridge were granted to Paul Bush, first bishop of Bristol^u.

Lands in Slimbridge belonging to the Hospital of Longbridge in Berkeley, were granted by Letters Patent of Elizabeth, 31st Decr., 1562., 4th. of her reign, to Edward Warner and his heirs.

Other lands parcel of Kingswood Abbey were granted to Sir Baptist Hickes, 5 James I.

A tenement in Slimbridge did belong to the Priory of St. Oswald's in Gloucester, and was granted to Sir Baptist Hickes, 7 Jas. I.

° Fosbroke's Gloucestershire.

^p Atkyns' Gloucestershire.

^q Vet. MS. in Castro de Berkeley.

^r Ex Autogr. *ibid*.

^s Augmentation Office.

^t *Ibid*.

^u Willis's Cathedrals, vol. ii. p. 773; Barrett's Bristol, p. 314.

The Rector of Frampton on Severn has about seventy-two acres in the new grounds, and fourteen acres in a lane adjoining.

The Vicar of Frampton on Severn has about seventy acres of glebe in this parish.

SECULAR PROPERTY.—Gossington Hall became the property of Joseph Bridger, afterwards of William Essington, and was purchased by Henry Jones, Esq., who left three daughters co-heiresses; Elizabeth, wife of John Marklove of Berkeley; Mary (deceased) wife of William Fisher Shrapnell, F.S.A.; and Ann, widow of George King, of Slimbridge, attorney at law. It was then sold to James Pick, and sold by him to William Cornock of Gouldwick, parish of Berkeley. James Cornock, a descendant of William, still holds possession of the hall.

Charles I. and his Queen had lands in Slimbridge.

Rolls Court (once the residence of Arnold Ligon) has been long leased for lives by the family of Davies. The Rev. William Davies, D.D., Rector of Rockhampton and Rural Dean of the Deanery of Dursley, the representative of this family, still owns a considerable estate in this parish.

ADVOWSON.—The advowson is a rectory in the gift of Magdalene College, Oxford. There is no mention of a Church in the Domesday Book. The earliest account we have of the advowson is that, in 1146, 11th of Stephen, Roger Lord Berkeley founded the Priory for Benedictine Monks at Stanley St. Leonard in the hundred of Whitstone in the county of Gloucester, and gave the patronage of it to the Abbey of St. Peter in Gloucester, to which it became a cell. He also gave to the Priory at the same time the advowsons of Cowley, Arlingham, Slimbridge and Uley, with the tithes, lands, and all things to them pertaining. This happened when Gilbert Foliot was Abbat, between 1139 and 1149. See MS. entitled,

Abbat Waltar Froucester's Chronicle*, also Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*; Dugdale's *Monasticon* under Stanley.

Fosbroke in his *History of Berkeley*, p. 79, quotes from the Berkeley MS. p. 88, that "Henry, fifth son of Robert Fitzhardinge, was Archdeacon of Exeter and Treasurer to Henry, Duke of Normandy. He was presented by Richard, the first Abbat of St. Augustine's at Bristol, (who was Abbat from about 1148 to 1186,) to sundry, and all other the Churches of the honor of Berkeley."

Barrett in his *History of Bristol*, p. 272, relates, that Robert, son of Harding, gave and granted to the Canons of St. Augustine for ever, all the Churches in the Berkeley Hereness, wheresoever they might be, with their Chapels and all things to them belonging.

Now it is not improbable that Slymbridge, lying in the Berkeley Hereness, was set out as one of these Churches in the grant, though it had been previously granted by Roger de Berkeley to Stanley St. Leonard.

For in 1224, 8 Hen. III., we find that there was a suit between Thomas de Breedon, Abbat of Gloucester, and Thomas (first of name) Lord Berkeley, concerning the Church of Slimbrugge. The suit was ended by Thomas Lord Berkeley giving to the Priory of Stanley St. Leonard the place of Lorlynge or Lorwynch in the parish of Cam, (now called LorrIDGE,) and the Abbat de Breedon released to him the Church of Slimbrugge.

Now we can see no reason why this suit should have arisen, or why Thomas Lord Berkeley should have been so anxious to put an end to it, as to give an estate, unless he was pledged to give the advowson to some other Body of Religious. Here again it is to be lamented that the only document which

* A copy of this exists in Queen's College, Oxford, and also another in the British Museum, MSS. Cott.

would clear up the difficulty, the aforesaid "Roll of Abbat Newland," is not accessible. "In 1484, 2 Richard III., the advowson of the Parsonage of Slimbridge in Gloucestershire, and of Findon in Sussex, was vested in Waynflete by the Earl of Nottingham, on condition that he and Johanna his wife should, while living, have daily participation of all the prayers and suffrages to be used in the Chapel of the College, (i.e. St. Mary Magdalene's College, Oxford,) that intercession should be made for ever for their souls, for that of Thomas, late Lord Berkeley, and those of James and Isabella his parents. Also that on the decease of the Earl and his wife, the President and Scholars should at a convenient time, after the knowledge of it, keep solemnly on the morrow an "obit de placebo, and Dirige and Mass Da requiem, per notam^y."

In an extract book in St. Mary Magdalene College is the following:—

"In 1685 (evidently a mistake for 1485 or 4) the parsonage of Slymbridge and Findon were given by the Earl of Nottingham to pray for him and the Lord Berkeley, 2 Richard III. Afterwards, 5 Henry VII., the Lord Berkeley entails his land to Henry VII. and his heirs male, which cant injure the College title, because the gift to the College preceeded."

Now this Earl Nottingham was William, son of James (first of name) Lord Berkeley, and Isabella his wife, who was before mentioned as giving his castle and lordship of Berkeley, twelve manors, and three advowsons, in the county of Gloucester, to Henry VII., to be made a Marquis. He was born 4 Henry IV., 1426, fought the battle on Nibley Green, and died without issue the 13th of February, 7 Henry VII., 1491.

By both these accounts it would appear that the advowson was granted on the aforesaid conditions by Earl Nottingham, afterwards William, Marquis of Berkeley, to the College of

St. Mary Magdalene. But in point of fact it seems that there never was any commemoration of the Lords Berkeley in the College Chapel, but there is of Henry VII., and as is supposed on account of his vesting the advowson of Slimbridge in the College.

He also reserved £10 per annum (more than a third of the annual value) out of the value of the living as a remuneration for this commemoration.

This commemoration was duly kept by the performance of a Mass on the first of May, till the Reformation, and since that time a Eucharistic Hymn is annually sung by the whole choir on the top of Magdalene tower, at five o'clock A.M., on the first of May, and for the said performance the Rector of Slymbridge pays annually the sum of ten pounds. This hymn would have been here printed, but that it may now be obtained for a trifle, printed with the score, and also an English translation.

It is probable therefore that when the Earl Nottingham conveyed his estates to Henry VII. for the purpose of being made a Marquis, Henry required that the prayers and suffrages in the College should be for his own benefit instead of the Lords Berkeley, and that he reserved from the annual value of the Parsonage the sum of £10 as a compensation to the College for the benefit he might receive, and for which, as the advowson was not his to give, they would otherwise not have been remunerated by him. And the Parson of Slymbridge, the only injured party, could have no redress, as it would be at his own option to accept the presentation to the Parsonage or not.

The great tithes, as well as the small, have always continued with the advowson, and there does not appear to have been ever any lay impropriation^z.

^z The following extracts from Dugdale's *Baronage*, vol. i., relate to the advowson:—
P. 361. Thomas de Berkeley, grand-

VALUATIONS.

Taxatio Ecclesiastica P. Nicholai.

Page 220. Wygorn. Sp.

Archidiaconat. Gloucestr.

In Decanat' de Dursel.

	Taxatio.	Decima.
Ecclia de Slymbrugg . . .	£28 13 4	£2 17 4
Pret. t̃r por̃co Prior de Stanl' .	0 13 4	0 1 4
In the Harleian Valor. it is rated at	£28 2s. 4d.	
In the Liber Regis—Synods . . .		£0 6 8
-----Proxies . . .		0 2 0
Reddit Collegio Mariæ Magd. Oxon . . .		10 0 0
Decano		1 13 6
Value		28 2 11
Yearly tenths		2 16 3½

In the year of our Lord 1801 the great and small tithes were commuted for land, by an act of inclosure, and the Rectory now consists of 347 acres of land.

There is a large Rectory-house in good repair, built about the year 1813.

RECTORS.—It is with great regret that so scanty a list of the Rectors of this parish is here afforded, but in consequence of not being able to obtain any information on the subject from the Registry at Worcester, in which diocese the county of Gloucester was from the year 679 to 1541, we are forced to content ourselves with the following list, collected from county histories, and from the Registry at Gloucester, where the institutions are carefully arranged and easily referred to.

James Berkeley^a, son of Thomas (second) Lord Berkeley, Bishop of Exeter^b, 1326.

John Stokesley, Bishop of London, 1530.

Edward Fox, 1531.

Owen Oglethorp, Bishop of Carlisle, 1556.

Thomas Caponhurst, instituted 1548, on death of Richard Scryven.

father of Thomas (fourth) Lord Berkeley, was possessed of the advowsons of the Churches of Wotton and Slimbridge. (Rot. Fin. 5 Hen. V. m. 14.)

P. 366. Maurice (fifth of name) recovered the advowson of Churches of

Wotton and Slymbridge. (E. Plac. coram Rege in Cancel. 19 Hen. VII.)

^a Dugdale's Baron. Clause 10 Ed. III. in dorso.

^b Pat. 20 Ed. II.

Lawrence Brydger, 1577, presented by Crown, by lapse.
 Nicholas Richardson, 1630, on death of Lawrence Brydger.
 Robert Williamson, 1644, on death of Nicholas Richardson.

John Holford was Rector in 1649, as appears by parish register.

William Coxe, instituted 1662, on cession of Peter Gwillim.
 Edmund Diggle, 1667, on death of William Coxe.
 Thomas Bayly, 1688, on death of Edmund Diggle.

Thomas Goodwin, 1691, on resignation of John Rogers.
 William Cradock, 1692, on resignation of Thomas Goodwin.
 John Turton, 1727, on death of William Cradock.
 Thomas Sherwin, 1756, on death of John Turton.
 Richard Swanne, 1761, on death of Thomas Sherwin.
 Saint John Stone, 1762, on death of Richard Swanne.
 Charles Walker, 1796, on death of St. John Stone.
 John Goldesbrough, 1811, on death of Charles Walker.
 The same, 1813, on his own cession.

The institutions of Peter Gwillim and John Rogers are not to be found. All the other Rectors, subsequent to Owen Oglethorp, were presented by the President and Scholars of St. Mary Magdalene College, Oxford, except Lawrence Brydger, who was presented by the Crown by lapse.

The first three on the above list were the Rectors of the greatest celebrity, as may be seen by a reference to Godwin's Bishops, by Richardson.

John Stokesley was one of King Henry's disputing agents sent to Rome on the subject of his divorce, and the limitation of the power of the Pope by Scripture—a discussion which the Pontiff declined. He is described as a violent persecutor of Protestants; died September 8th, 1539, and was buried in the Lady Chapel of St. Paul's, London.

Owen Oglethorp was President of St. Mary Magdalene College, Oxford, Dean of Windsor, and made Bishop of Carlisle by Queen Mary. He assisted at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth, which the rest of his order refused to do;

but he was afterwards deprived by her Majesty for his adherence to popish principles. It is said however that the Queen meant to restore him to that or a better Bishopric upon the promise of his general conformity, had he not died suddenly of apoplexy in 1559.

William Cradock was tutor to Addison, at St. Mary Magdalene College. It is related that when the illustrious pupil became secretary of state, he one day stopped at Cambridge and requested to see Dr. Cradock. The reply he received was, that it was the duty of the pupil to wait upon the tutor, whereupon Addison drove on and Cradock lost his chance of preferment. He was a Nonjuror, and lies buried, with several children, in the Chancel. A mural tablet commemorates his death, with the usual motto of Nonjurors, *Cætera quis nescit*.

CHANTRY.—“In 17th Edward III. Thomas (third) Lord Berkeley founded a Chantry in the Chapel of Cambridge in the parish of Slymbridge^c.” This Chantry we learn was dedicated to St. Catharine, and the fair at Cambridge, till within the last ten years, was always held on the 25th of November, St. Catharine’s day. Of the “Chapel at Cambridge” there remains no account, and it is most probable that Cambridge was used indiscriminately for the whole parish of Slymbridge. Sir R. Atkyns says that this Chantry was dedicated to St. Catharine and St. John Baptist. We are led to suppose therefore that there were two Chantries in the parish, especially as Willis, in his *Mitred Abbeys*, vol. ii. p. 88, gives the following account.

“Pensions paid An. 1553 to Incumbents of Chantries. Slimbridge. To John Browne Incumbent of St. Katherine’s Chantry, £4. and Will. Willington £5.”

^c Dugdale’s *Baronage*, vol. i. p. 358.

Lands belonging to one of these Chantries were granted to Ralph Sherman by Edward VI.^d

“Lands belonging to the Chantry at Cambridge, lying in Cambridge, were granted to Sir Oliver Cromwell 5. Jac.^e”

There is at Cambridge a field called Little Cheston, which has beyond a doubt been the site of some ancient building, as foundations, and stone pavement, have been found there within these few years. A skeleton also was found there some fourteen years ago, which, from all accounts, must have been deposited there for a very long time. This latter circumstance would lead to the suspicion of a Chantry on that site; but its name of course denotes a different use, and the coins which have been found there leave no room to doubt but that it was a Roman substation or villa, probably used as a station for depasturing their cattle. It would lie pretty nearly in the straight line from the Aust passage to Cirencester, but the flatness of the situation would prevent the likelihood of its having been a regular station.

The following coins have been preserved, which have lately been found there:—

ÆS. *Obv.* IMP(erator) CONSTANTINUS.

A galeated head of the Emperor, looking towards the sinister.

Rev. VICT(oriæ) LAETAE PR(incipis) PER(petui).

Two Victories holding over an altar a shield inscribed
VOTIS XX. (Constant. Percuss).

ÆS. *Obv.* FL(avius) JUL(ius) CONSTANTINUS. NOB(ilis) C(æsar).

The Emperor's head looking to Sinister, encircled with a Vitta.

Rev. CER POP(ulo) ROM(ano).

A figure looking to the dexter, in right hand holding a discus, in left
(illegible).

ÆS. *Obv.* Illegible.

Rev. A Roman soldier looking to Sinister, with his right hand dragging captive by hair of his head; with his left holding a standard.

The legend appears to be FEL. TEM. RE.

^d Rudder's Gloucestershire.

^e Atkyns' Gloucestershire.

ÆS. *Obv.* Head of male looking to sinister.

Illegible.

Rev. Two Victories supporting a shield wherein is inscribed VOT.
V. MVLT.

ÆS. In very good condition.

Obv. IMP. C. CARAVSIVS. P. F. AVG.

The head of the Emperor looking towards the Sinister edge, having a radiated crown.

Rev. PROV. AVG. GG.

A female figure emblematic of Providence, in her left a cornucopia—in the base C.

The reader may see an account of coins of this date in John Y. Akerman's work on Coins relating to Britain. Also in a Paper by C. R. Smith, in the Archaeological Journal, No. 2, pp. 182—3.

In another field have been found the following two coins of the Hans Towns :—

Brass. *Obv.* Three crowns, and three fleurs-de-lis alternate round a rose. Inscription round the edge, HANS. SC.

REGISTERS.—The earliest entry occurring in any Register is in the 11th of Charles I., 1635, on the 30th of March. The Registers of this date and down so late as to the 3rd of Anne, are kept according to the Regnal years of Charles I., the year commencing and ending on the 27th of March, so that any one, not being aware of this fact, might easily attribute an entry to the wrong year of our Lord.

The Baptisms follow in regular succession from 1635 to 1686 inclusive; there is then a gap of fifteen years, they are then complete from 1701 to 170¹/₂. Then comes a gap of twenty-three years, and they are then consecutive in different books up to the present time.

The Marriages are regularly entered from 1635 to 1639 inclusive, then comes a gap of four years. From 1643 to 1653 they are entered, then a gap of seven years. Then regular entries from 1660 to 1686, then a gap of twenty-two

years. Then regular entries from 1708 to 1722, then another gap of eight years. From 1730 to 1805 they are regularly entered, when there is a gap of eight years to 1813, from which time the entries are regular.

The Burials are regularly entered from 1635 to 1700 inclusive, there is then a gap of seven years. The entries then commence in 1708 and continue to 1713, when there is a gap of sixteen years. From 1729 to 1734 the entries are regular, but they then become irregular till they commence in 1740, from which date they continue to the present time.

Some of the Register Books are much mutilated, leaves having been wantonly cut out and cut in half, &c., and the writing in that from 1686 to 1722 is very illegible: they have been carefully collected, arranged and bound. The following somewhat singular entries occur, with some other hints which may possibly be useful to pedigree hunters.

During the troublesome times in the middle of the seventeenth century are found among entries of burials,

“A Welch souldier, 1642.”

“Giles Parker was bur^d Jany 25. 1643. he was murthered in his owne house, and no crowner sate on him.”

“The 19th of June 1644 there was buried in our church-yard a souldier whose name is to get knowne, he was killed by the enemy at Newport.”

“Lieftenant harris and Richard Taylor both souldiers shott at Bearkley Castle, they were buried the 8th of September 1644 souldier like wth the drumes and two peale of shott on the north side of the Church.”

“Edward Browne souldier and Cook to the garrison was buried the 27th October 1644.”

“Edward Dull a souldier was buried the 13th of August 1645.”

“Henry Dayse serjeant buried ye 10th Oct. 1645.”

The following entry is of importance, as shewing the continuance of discipline in the Church up to a certain period, though with some relaxation.

“Eady y^e wife of John Sparks, lying under the Sentence of Excommunication buried July 18. (1682) but without the usual offices, yet according to the Statute in Woollen only as appeareth by the oaths of Katharine Highway and Sarah Lippet made and taken before Mr. Butt, Vicar of Frampton July 22 (1682).”

Another entry prior to this one also shews that a lying place in the churchyard was granted, at this period, (and the fact recorded,) to those who were denied the rites of Christian burial.

“A man child of Richard Trotman’s not baptized was buried the 14th of Jan. 1668.”

In 1668 also occurs the following quaint entry.

“Non occides Joyce the wife of Thomas Dallow was buried the 9th of Jany and had an untimely end as it is thought.”

“In 1662 Thomas Wilkinson was buried the 23rd of July, he was kild wth a fall of a Pear-tree and the Crowner’s Inquest sate upon him according to the law in that case provided.”

The discretion which was exercised in those days as to the Crowner’s interference seems to have been somewhat arbitrary.

It would seem from the following entry that strangers were not buried without the request of the Clergyman of their Parish.

“William y^e Son of William Beard late of Slimbridge now of Frampton rogatu M^{ri} Paul vicarii ibidem Bur. here June 22 (1671).”

In its proper place is a notice, by Edmund Diggle, S.T.P. Rector, of the act relating to burying in Woollen “commencing or coming into force Aug. 1. 1678.”

“Memorandum, that the act for burying in Woollen was

by Mr. Jos. Marshall who then officiated in time of Divine Service in the morning publicly read to the Congregation then present in the Parish Church of Slimbridge in the County of Gloucester on the 25th of August 1678 being the first Sunday after St. Bartholemew's Day the said yeare as the act requires."

The affidavit is carefully alluded to in all cases of burial up to the year 1745 with very few exceptions, and the rigidity with which the act was enforced may be inferred from the following.

"Elizabeth wife of Thomas Dull alias Dowle buried July 24 (1681). Noe affidavit or certificate brought in within the time by the act specified. Notice hereof given in writing to the Churchwardens Aug. 2. 1681. A warrant thereupon issued and the money £5 paid to the Churchwardens."

In the earliest Register Book of Marriages, is this notice, apparently written by Edmund Diggle, Rector.

"Marriages omitted by the then Book-keeper but here inserted out of my private Register," wherein he enumerates *Parishioners married out of the Parish.*

In another register, a certain careful custody of the same is indicated by the following.

"John Mabbot and Mary Davis both of the psh of Slimbridge were married in the psh Church of Slimbridge by Licence Sep. 20. 1760 by me Thos. Sherwin, Rector.

The Marriage was solemnized between us

In the presence of

"It is not proper to make a rasure in the register and therefore I think it necessary to own that I made the entry upon their appearance at Church, but the woman proved inconstant and they departed without marriage."

And a very sufficient cause is afterwards discovered for the trouble and confession to which this worthy Rector was

driven, for on the 23rd day of the very next month this fair inconstant became the wife of one Daniel Cribb as appears by the said Register.

It is remarkable that during the Incumbency of Thomas Sherwin, from 1756 to 1761, the Bride has invariably signed herself by the name of her husband and not by her maiden name, as is usually the case.

In the earliest register book of Baptisms we find the following declaration.

“Eady the daughter of Christopher Munday baptized Aug. y^e 13 (1671) where note that the names are and shall bee registred accordingly as they were pronounced at the ffont.”

The following entry appears in the register book of that date.

“On the 6th day of this inst March 1708 it was agreed Nemine contradicente at the Vestry meeting for y^e Poor that the Rector having propos'd and promised freely to set apart the Tenement at Churchend for a School house for four poor children to be therein taught to read the Bible, and also to knitt or sew, the Parish would pay two shill' p week for sixteen children more to be taught therein likewise; and that y^e said money should be paid monthly to y^e Dame by the Churchwardens or overseers, who should together with y^e Minister name and appoint the School Dame, and y^e said children to be taught by her; their Parents or Friends paying her two pence for each child (for her care and pains) by the Quarter.

In witness hereof the Churchwardens and Overseers have set their hands.

JOHN DAVIES HENRY DAVIES
ARTHUR HOWETH JOHN WADE.

————— certified this agreement in y^e Vestry on Easter Monday.

W. CRADOCK.

Of this good agreement no vestage remains either as to House, Dame or Scholars.

BENEFACTIONS.—There are four acres and one quarter of land lying in two different places belonging to the Church, and of which the Churchwardens are the trustees. A large brick house was built about fifty years ago on the piece which lies on the west side of the Church. The whole is now let for the annual rent of £21, which is received by the Churchwardens and laid out upon the necessary expenses of the Church. No single document can be found relating to this property, nor is there any tradition as to the party who left it, or the time at which it was left. But it is certain that the Churchwardens have had long and undisturbed possession of it, though the house was let at the rent of 10s. per annum for several years to the overseers for the purposes of a poor-house.

William Smith, by his will dated October 6th, 1774, left three pounds to be charged upon messuages, lands, and hereditaments in the parish of Slimbridge, and made payable thereout to the Rev. John Stone, Rector of Slimbridge, and his successors as being Rectors of the said parish for ever, on the 29th day of September in every year, and so made payable to him and them upon this special trust and confidence, that he and his successors should lay out the said yearly sum of £3 in the purchase of sixpenny and threepenny loaves of bread, and distribute and dispose of the same to and amongst the proper objects of charity that belong to the parish of Slimbridge, yearly on old St. Thomas's Day for ever.

He charges the Churchwardens to assist in the distribution of the bread, and in case of the Rector omitting to perform his trust, gives them power to exercise and distribute the said sum of money.

He also leaves power to enter and dispose of stock, if the money be not paid in thirty days after the 29th of September ;

and if there be no stock, power to enter at the end of two months, and receive rent.

Mrs. Catharine Worlock, widow, of the parish of Uley, by her will dated Jan. 30, 1802, directed her trustee, John Vizard, of Dursley, to pay to the minister and Churchwardens of the parish of Slimbridge, at the time of her decease, the sum of £80 stock, part of monies in the 3 per cent. consol bank annuities, and made similar bequests to the parishes of King's Stanley and Uley.

And the testatrix, by her will, declared that the said £80 stock should by the minister and Churchwardens of the said parish of Slimbridge, for the time being, for ever, be placed out at interest, in their names, on government or real securities, upon the trust and confidence that the Minister and Churchwardens of the parish for the time being for ever thereafter, should with the interest, dividends, or proceeds thereof, yearly lay out the same near to St. Thomas' Day in every year, and on that day yearly for ever give and dispose of the bread so purchased to and amongst such number of poor widows in the said parish who should be housekeepers, and most in need and want thereof.

Power was left to Minister and Churchwardens to invest the said £80 stock in freehold lands, provided that the rents and profits were applied to the purposes aforesaid.

Stephen Rudge, of the parish of Slimbridge, by his will dated 5th of January, 1830, left a piece of land, part of Henworthy field, lying in the parish of Slimbridge, containing by admeasurement one acre, three roods, and ten perches, in trust to the Minister and Churchwardens of the parish of Slimbridge and their successors for ever, that they should let the same to the best advantage, and yearly every year for ever lay out one moiety of the rents and profits in the purchase of good wholesome bread, and distribute the same on Saint Thomas' Day

amongst the poor and necessitous labouring people of and in the parish of Slimbridge aforesaid (to each more or less) as they should in their discretion consider the fittest objects of charity. And also that they should pay and apply the other moiety of the rents and profits for and towards the support and promotion of the Sunday School of the Established Church in Slimbridge aforesaid.

PARISH ACCOUNTS.—The Churchwardens' accounts are most remarkable for the interminable war which they record against God's creatures up to the year 1836. In many years the heads of nearly 3000 sparrows at a halfpenny each are entered in due form. The premium for a fox was one shilling, for a "fitcher" 4d., for a hedgehog 2d.; and there is also a yearly entry over and above for "varmint" amounting to about 8s., all of which was paid out of the Church-rates.

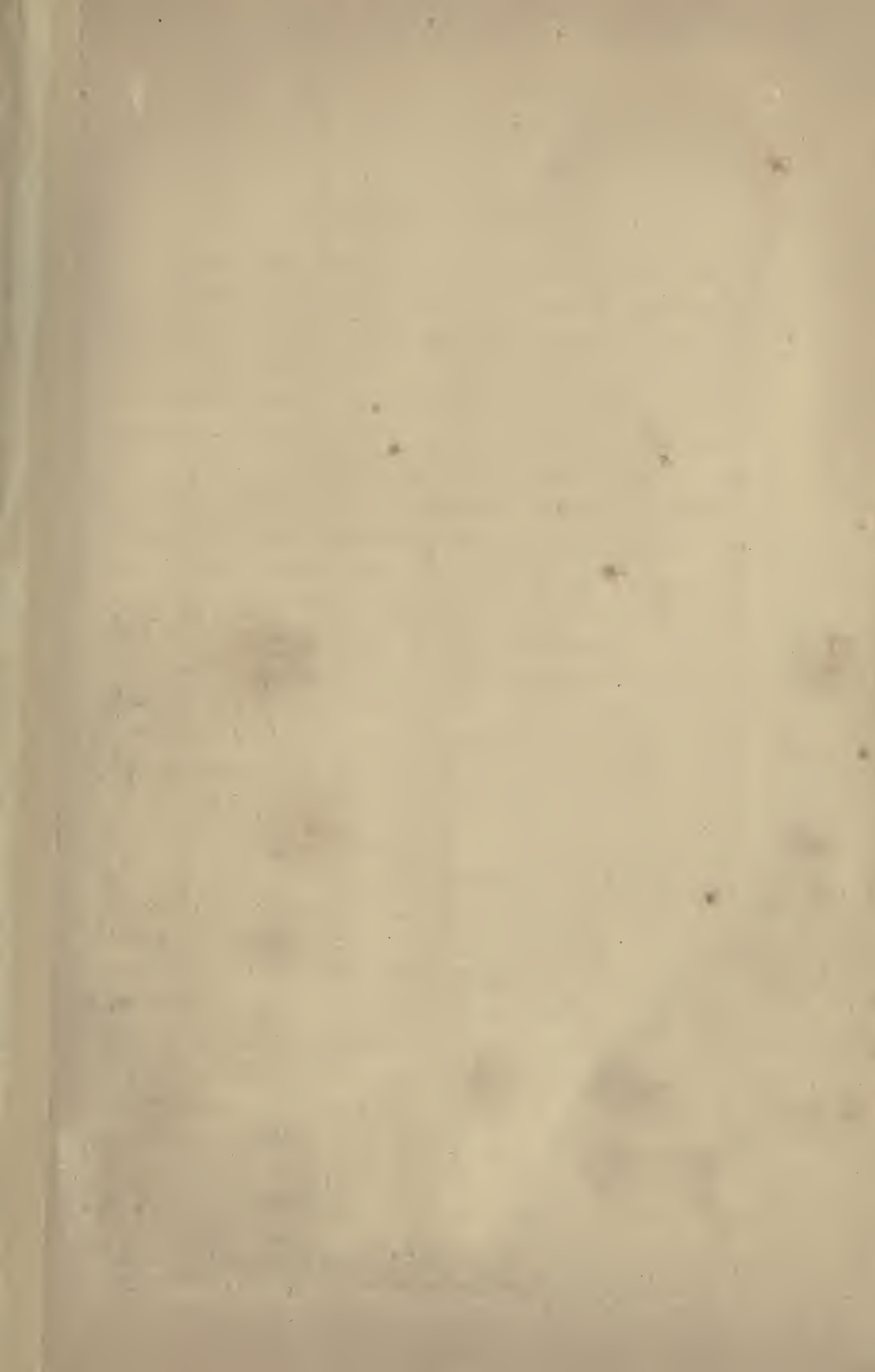
There is also an entry "For Ringing the Sermon Bell."

The Church.

THE CHURCH, situated on the left hand side of the road from Bristol to Gloucester, is no doubt an object of interest to travellers, from its lofty and very graceful spire, which rises amidst the dense foliage of that flat but fertile vale. At the present speed of railroad travelling, regardless alike of the sublime and picturesque, a glance of it only can be obtained between the Berkeley and Frocester stations.

Of the building of this Church there exists no account, as far as can be ascertained; and therefore to answer the question so commonly asked, What is the date of it? would be mere presumption. An accurate description of each of its constituent parts will furnish the best clue, as to its age, to those who are in the habit of investigating such matters. There can be no doubt, that at whatever time the Church was built, it was built and endowed by the noble house of Berkeley, whose piety and generosity in those days was conspicuous by their interest in all the Churches within their demesne.

There is no mention of a Church in the Domesday Book, but from the fact of the advowson having been given to the Priory of Stanley St. Leonard's, as mentioned above, there must have been a Church at that time, i.e. at the latest in 1146, and if the account in Dugdale's Baronage be correct, that the Priory was founded in the time of William the Conqueror, then there must have been a Church at that time. In the course of the repairs and restorations some loose stones have been found, bearing evident marks of Norman or semi-Norman work, which would give rise to a very strong suspicion that a Church existed on the same site of earlier date than the present one, and that part of the old materials were used in building the present Church.





F. Tibbitts del.

G. B. Smith sculp.

STYMBRIDGE CHURCH.

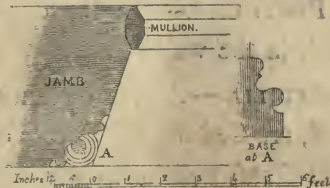
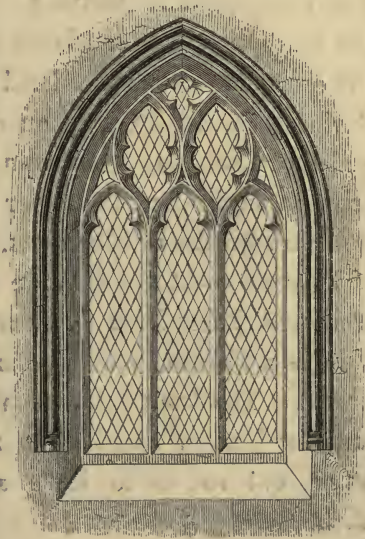
FROM THE WEST.

DEDICATION.—The Liber Regis and County histories inform us that the Church is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, but there is no tradition or commemoration whatever of this fact. The only Saint to whom any marked respect has been paid is St. Thomas, there being certain small sums left to be distributed annually to the poor in bread on his day, and there being also a custom called Mumping, when every woman in the parish who is able, goes from house to house to ask alms, which in most cases they receive.

PLAN.—The Church consists of a Chancel, nave, tower at the west end, north and south aisle, south porch, and vestry on the north side of the Chancel, of the dimensions given above.

ORIENTATION.—The Church does not stand due East but is five degrees to the North of East, by no means confirming the supposition with regard to the Saint's Day to whom the Church is dedicated, but rather militating against it.

EAST WINDOW.—The east window is Decorated, of three lights trefoiled. The upper compartments are filled with two quatrefoiled ovals, with a plain quatrefoil at the apex. The mullions are plain chamfered. It is deeply set in the wall, and there is a jamb-moulding, as may be seen by the section given, consisting of a bead, deep hollow, with shaft having a sharp fillet and bead re-



EAST WINDOW.

turned. There is a base-moulding but no capping. This runs round the whole of the splay and window-arch. There is an external drip terminating on the north side in the head of a Queen, and on the south in that of a Bishop.

STAINED GLASS.—In the centre light is left a shield of richly stained glass, gules, a chevron ermine between ten crosses pateé argent. Name Berkeley of Stoke Gifford. The ovals are also filled with stained glass. In the north one is a full-length figure, with the hair flowing, in a loose saffron vest reaching down to the knee; the leg and foot below that being naked. The left hand holds a long banded staff resting on the ground and terminating above in the point of the oval. The right hand is pointing forward with the fore-finger. In the south oval is a mutilated figure, the head being lost. In the quatrefoil above is a head (apparently that of our Blessed Saviour) thrown back in an attitude of devotion. The hair and beard are long and flowing, the face and head are of deep crimson, and round the upper part to the bottom of the ear is a narrow border of blue glass.

PISCINA.—At the distance of 3 feet 2 inches from the east wall, and 2 feet from the floor under a window on the south side, is a Piscina, with ogee-arch trefoiled, and a quatrefoiled orifice. The front leaf which projected had been broken off, and the bottom part had been entirely filled up with a large stone, cut so as to leave a ledge in front. There is no shelf.

PROTHESIS.—On the opposite side is a Prothesis of stone, sunk in the wall.

SEDILIA.—At the distance of 5 feet 8 inches from the east wall, are Sedilia, three seats on the same level, divided by plain chamfered mullions, ogee arches trefoiled, the spandrel spaces filled with a trefoil. A plain quatrefoiled panelling about 4 inches deep runs the whole length under a Perpendicular

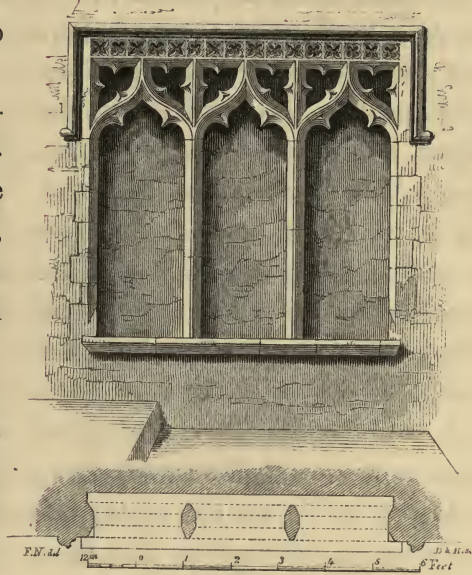
hood-moulding, square and terminating at the springing of the arches in rectangular curves dying into the wall.

ALTAR-STEPS.—

There are two Altar-steps running the whole width of the Chancel, the highest at the distance of 10 feet from the east wall.

ALTAR-TABLE.—

The Communion-table is a very common one of oak, painted, and the whole floor of the Sacramentarium at present is in very bad condition.



SEDILIA.

RAIL.—The Altar-rail is a new one of English oak, running across from the north to the south wall. It consists of semi-circular arches intersecting each other, with cusps terminating in oak-leaves. The mullions are square with hollow chamfer. There is a cap-moulding, and plain chamfered base. For this comely and much needed piece of Church furniture the parish is indebted to the kindness of the Rev. R. G. Swayne, Curate.

SIDE WINDOWS.—On the north side of the Chancel are two windows, the first at a distance of 11 inches from the east wall, the second near the bottom of the Chancel, both Decorated, two lights, ogee-arches trefoiled with quatrefoiled oval in head; they are set deeply in the wall, and the first is splayed towards the west and not towards the east, no doubt to shew some painting which was originally there.

On the south side are three windows, Decorated, two lights, equilateral arches cinquefoiled, the heads filled with a sixfoiled circle. In three of these windows are shields of stained glass of superior quality. In the second on the north side is one, argent, on a canton gules a rose or, name Bradstone. In the second on the south side there is one so transposed that it is not possible to describe it. In the third, Quarterly, per fess indented, ermine and gules. All have external drips, on the north side terminating in rectangular curves dying into the walls; on the south, one drip has a termination like three pears or figs springing from one stem.



ELEVATION. — The Chancel is elevated one step. On the north side is what is now used as a Vestry. There is only one entrance, a door at the foot of the altar-steps. There is every appearance of its being as old as the Church. It originally had a Catharine wheel window on the north side, which was knocked out some years ago, and a very hideous one put in its room "to let in more light." A set-off in the wall about half way up seems to indicate that there was an intention of placing a floor there, and there being two windows, one above and the other below it, strengthens the same supposition. A fire-place and chimney occupy the centre of the eastern wall, and if these were always there they would mark it as the occasional residence of a Chantry Priest. If, as is possible, the fire-place has usurped the place of

the Altar, the lower part, at least, must have been used as a Chantry.

ROOF.—The roof of the Chancel is coved plaster, having under it a common collar-beam roof of American pine.

Immediately below the Sedilia is a Priest's door; the inside arch is segmental, the outside one pointed, having a drip with head termination.

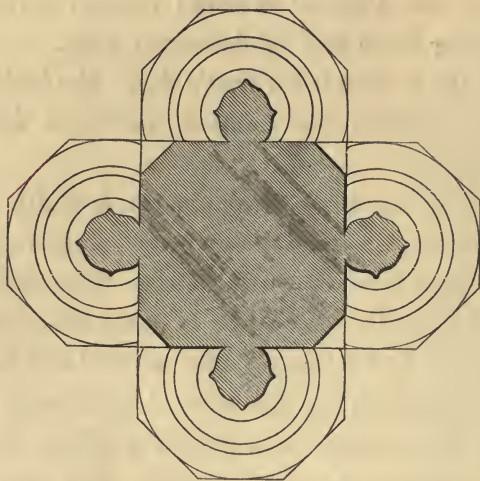
NAVE ARCH.—The Nave-arch spanning the whole width of the Nave is deeply chamfered, having double round mouldings with sharp fillets, springing from caps with foliage. The shafts on which the caps rest extend a short distance down the piers, and are carried on small corbels apparently marked out for being carved but not finished; on the west side there is a label, a plain round terminating in a female head on the north side and an Ecclesiastic's on the south. The space above the arch was till lately occupied by the king's arms in a frame. (Geo. II.^f)

ROOD LOFT.—In the piers just below the caps were notches where the beams of the Rood-loft rested. At present there is a slight carved oak screen, with semicircular arches, of James I., and immediately under it, on the north side, is a door (lately discovered) leading up the rood-loft stairs, which are walled up in the south-east angle of the north aisle. The door entering on the loft is concealed by a large mural tablet, the head of it only being visible. On the south side, under the screen, between it and the first pier, is a Piscina, shewing plainly that at some time an Altar was placed at the east end of the Nave. It has an ogee arch, trefoiled, with a shelf and circular orifice. The front part of the basin which projected has been broken off, and all below the shelf was, till lately, bricked up and concealed behind a pew.

PIERS, CAPS, BASES.—There are three piers and two half

^f See Appendix.

piers, carrying four arches on either side of the nave. The piers measure 6 feet from the base to the cap.



PLAN OF NAVE PIER.

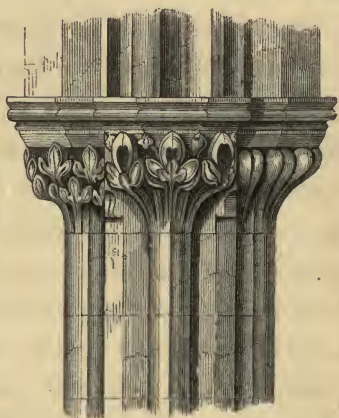


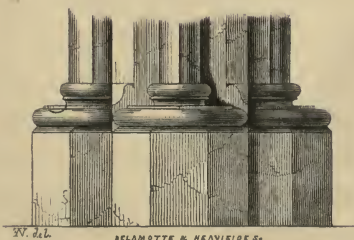
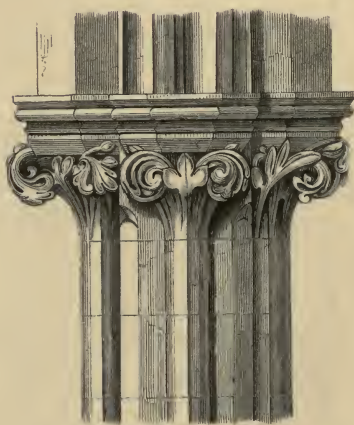
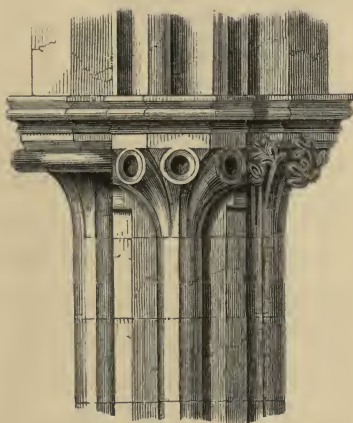
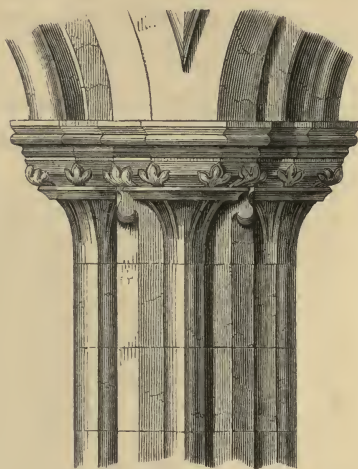
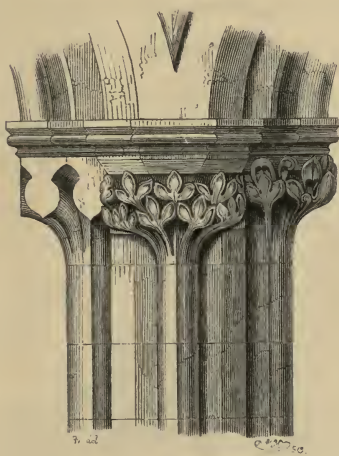
CAP MOULDING.



BASE MOULDING.

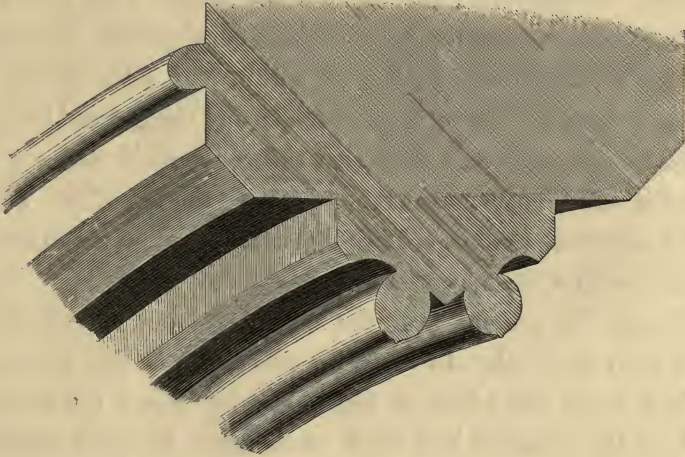
CAPITALS.—The Capitals are very beautifully foliated, it is said by some competent judges, hardly to be surpassed in elegance. In the foliage the fleur-de-lis predominates, but so varied as to assume a different aspect in each cap. Each shaft throughout the Church, with very few exceptions, carries a different pattern of foliage. There is no neck-moulding. Engravings of several of them, though perhaps not the most elegant, are given, but it is hardly possible by any drawing or engraving to do justice to this peculiarly beautiful feature of the Church. It can only be said that they are well worthy of inspection and imitation in any case where the elegance of Early English foliage is desired.





BASE, AND CAPITALS.

PIER ARCHES.—The arches are of the same construction as the nave-arch, all of them drop-arches ; on the interior surface they have a plain round hood-moulding mitreing over each pier ; the terminations, if ever there were any, have been broken off.

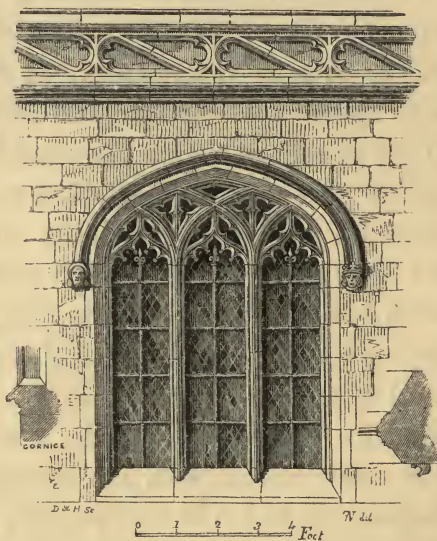


ARCH MOULD OF NAVE.

CLERESTORY.—The Clerestory is 33 feet high to wall-plate and 37 to ridge-piece of roof. The following is the history of its roof as far as by recent discoveries during the restorations has been ascertained. The original roof was a high pitched one, as can be seen by the weather-moulding now inside the Church against the tower. The wall-plate must have been about 2 feet above the roof of the north aisle. It could not have covered the aisles at one span, though it would seem there was a very small break in it, and that the aisles were covered by a steep sloping roof. Whenever this roof was destroyed the clerestory must have been raised about 8 or 9 feet and four large windows inserted on each side ; a waggon-head or coved roof was then erected, with oak boarding, and transverse and longitudinal ribs, with very elegantly worked bosses of Perpendicular character at the intersections. A few of these have lately been collected, but it is much to be deplored that vast

numbers of them were wantonly thrown away when this roof was taken down in the year 1814. A king-post and tie-beam roof of common American pine was then substituted for it, there appearing nothing from the inside but a flat white-washed ceiling. In the year 1811, eight new windows were placed in the clerestory, of three lights, Churchwardens' gothic. The effect of these arrangements, both from within and without, was as different from the rest of the Church as any thing could be, and conveyed no other idea than that the conventicle had got the better of the Church and perched itself on the top of it. There was a miserable shallow cornice of Forest stone on the exterior, blocked with a solid heavy battlement.

During the present year the whole of these abominations have been removed. In order to effect this it was necessary to take down the whole of the clerestory except the eastern wall, as the windows had been set to range with the exterior, and it was not possible to get the principals of the roof over the piers without a fresh arrangement of the windows. The clerestory is now rebuilt with solid ashlar; there are eight new windows of the design here given, glazed with Cathedral glass, and an entirely new cornice and parapet is placed on the exterior. The roof is Perpendicular, with tie-beam, king-post, and principal rafters, and up-right tracery on either side of the king-posts. The wall pieces, 6 feet long, are



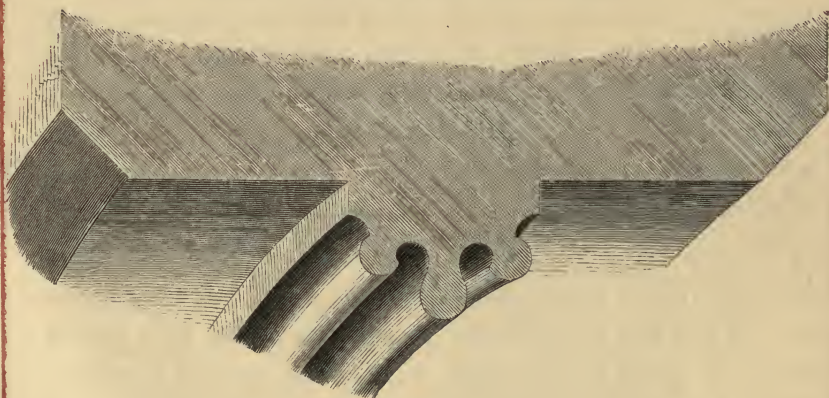
CLERESTORY WINDOW CORNICE, AND PARAPET.

supported on Angel brackets of stone, placed about the level of the wall-plate of the original high pitched roof. The Angels are all of them in attitudes of prayer and devotion; the two easternmost ones are in their "Coronation robes," feathered down to the feet, and have musical instruments. Moulded curved ribs, connected with the struts and stilted on the brackets, meet under the centre of the tie-beam, with wheel-tracery in the spandrel spaces. The dimensions of the scantlings are as follow. Six tie-beams 18 feet long, 8 by 12 inches; six king-posts, 5 feet long, 15 by 8 inches; principal rafters, 9 feet long, 8 by 10 inches; 102 chamfered common rafters, 10 feet long, 4 by 5 inches, 116 moulded purlins, 5 by 7 inches. Ridge-piece, 58 feet long, 11 by 5 inches; 108 feet moulded cornice, 11 by 9 inches; 360 feet moulded curved ribs, 5 inches thick; 12 struts, 6 feet long, 7 by 8 inches. On the whole, the appearance of this roof is very majestic, there being nothing scanty or lean about it. It is made of the best Memel oak, and constructed after the old method of mortice and tenon, without the help of iron-work. The mouldings, tracery, and flowered cusps are finished to the greatest nicety. At the same time it is a serious question whether violence has not been done to the style of the Church by the imposition of this roof; and if it had been possible to have ascertained exactly what the original roof had been before the old part was pulled down, it would no doubt have been a matter of grave consideration whether the present clerestory should not have been removed altogether, and the high pitched roof restored to its original position. But in *restoring* it is no easy matter to foresee what may be buried under centuries of white-wash and plaster; and in the present case it was a great object to have the new work ready to put up before the old was taken down. And while the taking down of the old work would have given more ample opportunity for survey, it is no

slight consolation to think that in a large parish, having only one Church, Divine Service was not stopped for one single Sunday, though the roof and clerestory were taken down the first Monday in September. This however with many other circumstances connected with these restorations, may tend to shew two things, the one that before any restorations can be safely commenced, every atom of white-wash and plaster should be removed from the Church, the other that the motto of all zealous Church restorers should be "*Festina lente.*" The whole of these restorations have been effected under the superintendence of Francis Niblett, Architect.

A serious difficulty was met with in this part of the restorations from the unsuspected fact of the south aisle being 14 inches higher than the north.

TOWER-ARCH.—The western arch springs from plain chamfered piers, rising from the ground to the height of 16 feet to



the springers. It is a drop arch, consisting of triple round mouldings, the centre one projecting, dying into the piers at the springing, without any capping.

PULPIT.—The Pulpit stands on the interior of the second south pier, the shaft and capping of which have been chopped away to receive it. It is of carved oak, octagonal, James I.

DESK.—The Reading Pew is a large unsightly enclosure of deal beneath it, with clerk's desk by the side.

PEWS.—The whole of the Nave and Aisles are pewed with large square deal pews, looking all ways, to the height of 4 feet 9 inches. In one of the pews, in the north aisle, which is of oak, are the letters A B. I M. 1630 carved in relief, but whether this be the date of the pew or a piece of panelling brought from elsewhere, there is no means of ascertaining.

NORTH AISLE. WINDOWS.—The East window in the North aisle is Flamboyant, four lights, cinquefoiled, a double mullion in the centre with ogee moulding on it and jambs inside. The other mullions are hollow chamfered inside, all plain chamfered outside. There is an external drip with rectangular curve terminations. There is a little stained glass, much mutilated, with rich crown pattern border, and also the lead shewing the form of a nimbus round the heads of saints in three lights, whom irreverence has long since destroyed. There are three windows on the North side and one at the West, Perpendicular, three lights, cinquefoiled; arches of good pitch, plain neck moulding, mullions and jambs plain chamfered. Some stained glass also remains in the heads of these windows, (which are supermullioned in six compartments,) as a witness against the desecrating hand which has destroyed the rest. There is no drip.

NORTH DOOR.—There is a North door with plain semi-circular arch outside, the inside arch being segmental. A plain round drip remains, with the terminations broken off.

ROOF.—The Roof is of slanting deal (of clumsy construction), the struts carried on stone corbel-heads of elaborate workmanship. There are two corbels of smaller size over the first arch, of which the use is not known.

SOUTH AISLE. WINDOWS.—The East window of the South aisle is a three-light Perpendicular window, altogether debased, the only bad window in the Church. It is not shown in its

present deformity in the transverse section. On the South side are three windows, and at the west one, Perpendicular, three lights, ogee arches cinquefoiled, supermullioned. A very elegant ogee moulding on the mullions and jambs is returned on the outside. The featherings are bold, and the cusps, terminating in rosettes of very delicate execution, remain on the outside of most of them. There are external drips to all these windows terminating some in heads and some in squares (containing a leaf), of which one angle is inclined upwards. The window arches are of good pitch.

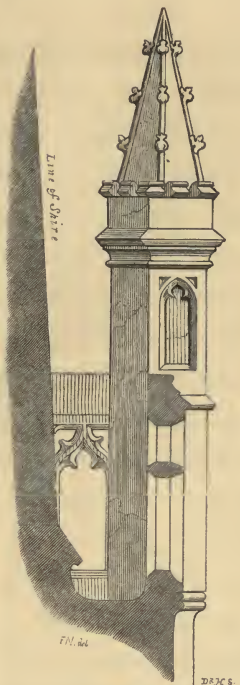
PISCINA.—There is a Piscina in the south wall 2 feet 2 inches from east wall, ogee arch trefoiled, and quatrefoiled orifice. The front leaf which projected has been broken off. This makes in all, three Piscinæ in the Church.

ROOF.—The roof is of slanting oak, of rough construction. The corbels on which the wall-pieces are carried are very good, about the latter part of the Sixth Henry's reign. Those in the north aisle are somewhat later in date. There are ten corbels in the north aisle, and sixteen in the south, beside the two small ones already mentioned.

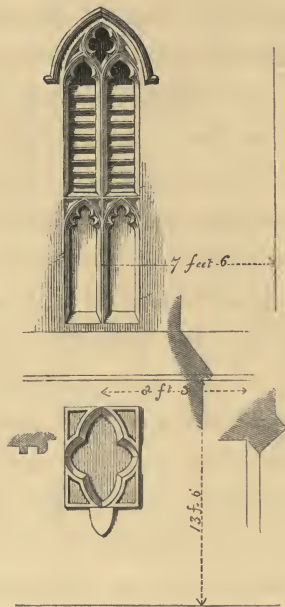
PARCLOSSES.—In both aisles the easternmost arches were blocked up from east to west, and a parclose carried from the piers to the north and south walls. The notches in the caps of the piers still remain where the framework of the parclose was inserted.

TILES.—Some good encaustic tiles scattered over the floor afford sufficient evidence that the whole Church was paved with them; the patterns are broken by grave stones, and most of them are very much worn.

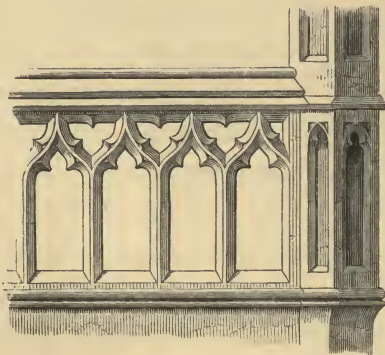
FONT.—The Font is close to the western arch, of lead, circular, with the date 1664 on it. It has a miserable wooden cover, and is placed on an octagonal stone base; is large enough for immersion, and has a water drain.



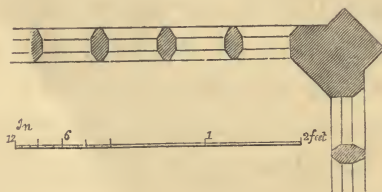
SECTION THROUGH BATTLEMENT.



WINDOW AND PANEL IN SECOND STAGE.



ELEVATION OF BATTLEMENT.



Scale, half an inch to one foot.

PLAN OF BATTLEMENT.

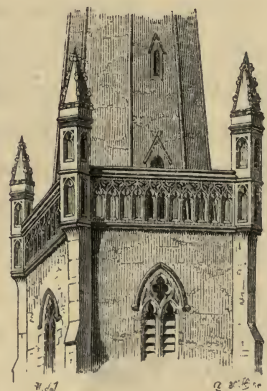
TOWER.—The Tower is square, of three stages, with a stone spiral staircase up to the first stage. There is a base mould running round the exterior. The roof is carried on four groining ribs, springing from corbels of an Early English character at the four corners. In it is now a trap-door for raising the bells through. The belfry is upon this roof. There is an arch looking into the Church which originally looked into the valley of the high-pitched roof, and which appears from its shape to have been used for getting the bells through, as the jambs have been cut away towards the base. There are five bells of very sweet tone, having no inscription on them but the names of the Churchwardens, &c. In the first stage of the tower is the west window of three lights Early Decorated, pointed arches, trefoiled, crossing in head, the three compartments being filled with quatrefoils. The doorway under the window is of sharp pitch on the exterior, with a segmental arch on the interior. The buttresses are angular, divided into four stages, finishing in pinnacles with finials. A very elegant battlement runs round the tower, pierced with trefoiled tracery in the arches and spandrels. The height is about 75 feet.

SPIRE.—Out of it rises the peculiarly slender and graceful Spire to the height of about 74 feet, into an octagon with angle beads.

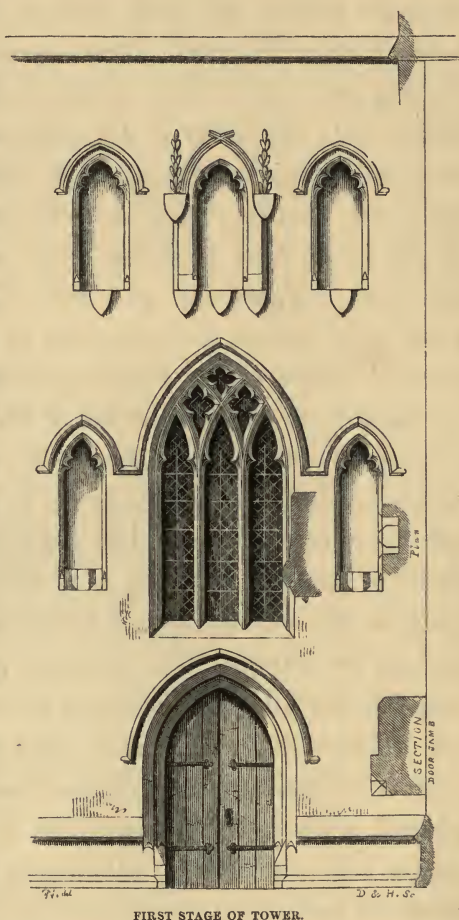
On the western face of the tower are several niches and

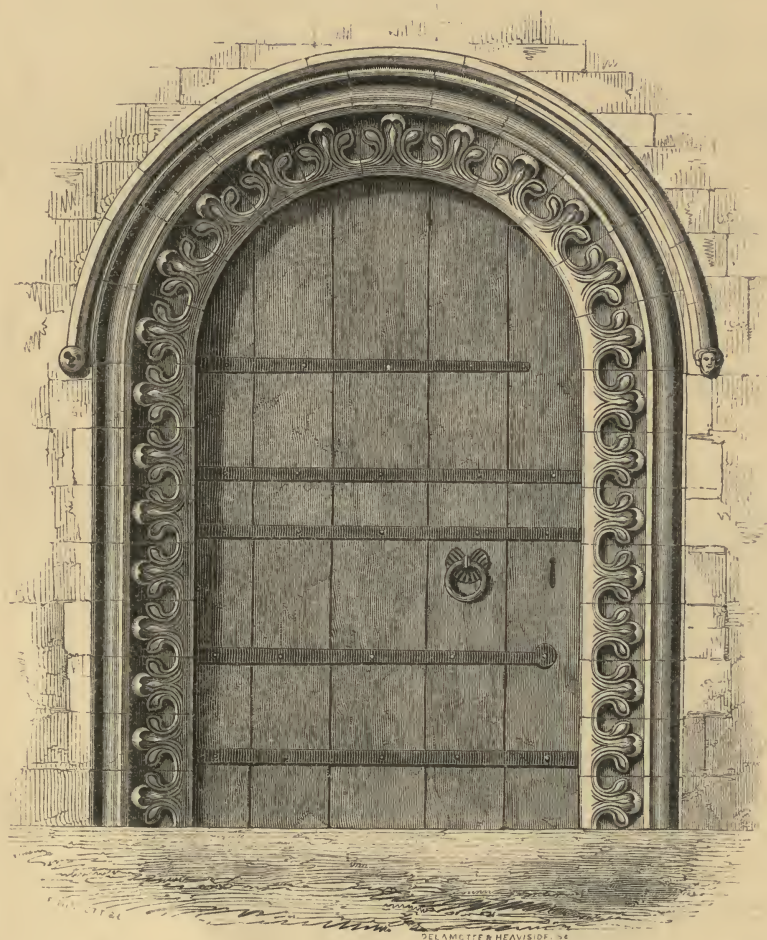


BASE MOULD OF TOWER.

ELEVATION OF BATTLEMENT
AND PINNACLES.

some shields, the coats of which have never, apparently, been charged. On either side of the west window is a nich rising to the height of the springer. The drip of the window is continued over them. The staples which held the figures are still remaining. Each has a pedestal. Above the window are three niches, the centre one higher than the others, cinquefoiled, having separate drips. There is a shield under each of the outside ones, and three under the centre one. The two outside shields run up in shafts with a shield returned on the top, out of which rises a crocketed shaft to the line of the apex of the drip. The drip does not mitre at the point of section, but is carried through, affording an evidence that the persons who made the working drawings were Geometricians, but did not erase the curves beyond the point of section, and that the workmen ignorantly copied the drawing exactly. There is every probability that this centre nich contained the Rood, and those beside it the accompanying figures of the Blessed Virgin and St. John. A similar arrangement is to be found at Westbury-on-Severn in Glouce-





SOUTH DOORWAY

tershire, and at Burford in Oxfordshire, though at the latter it is over the porch.

In the second stage is a large quatrefoil with a shield under, the staple still remaining.

The third stage has a window with louvre stones, two lights trefoiled, and a drip. A transom divides a blank window under it, of two lights, cinquefoiled. This window is the same on all sides of the tower, and on the north and south sides there is a loop window in the first stage, trefoiled. The door out of the spire to the battlement is on the east side, and there are loop holes on the north, south, and west sides of the spire rather above the level of the battlement.

SOUTH DOORWAY.—The inner doorway of the south porch has a semicircular arch with a very beautiful moulding, with Early English flowers running round it without base or cap. The hood-moulding terminates on the east side in a female head, and on the west in a ball-flower. There is every appearance, on a careful examination, of the ball-flower having been worked at the same time as the rest of the door, and if so it was one among numerous instances of the fallacy of the theory so dogmatically stated, that the ball-flower is an indubitable characteristic of the Decorated style. The inside arch of this doorway is segmental.



SECTION OF MOULDING OF SOUTH DOORWAY.

The outer doorway of the porch has a pointed arch. The roof is vaulted of rough stone plastered without any groining. Over the porch is a Parvise which has evidently been used at some time as a residence, the wall and beams in the south-east corner being charred with fire and smoke. The roof is of solid arched timber, but in very bad repair, and there is a

plain pointed loop-hole looking into the Church. The entrance to it is from the inside of the south aisle by a square trefoiled-headed door just below the south door, it is hidden in the longitudinal section by the third pier. The staircase is contained in a turret at the north-west angle of the porch. Over the Parvise is a Sun-dial.

The south aisle and porch have a ball-flower course blocked with a solid parapet. On the north side there is no parapet. The roof of the Chancel and Clerestory is covered with slate, the aisles and porch with lead. The gurgoyles, four on the north side and six on the south, project boldly and are very grotesque.

CHANCEL BUTTRESSES.—The buttresses of the Chancel and Vestry are of an Early character, about 17 inches by 14 inches, of one stage, 9 feet high, with a plain capping, having three set-offs. There are no buttresses against the aisles, rather a remarkable feature in the Churches of Gloucestershire in the same neighbourhood.

MONUMENTS.—There are five mural tablets in the nave recording the deaths of several members of the family of Davies, for many years possessors of considerable property in the parish. There is also one "to a Practitioner of Physic," which the county historians have honoured with the designation of a "very handsome monument," adorned with undressed cupids, &c.

RESTORATIONS.—The whole of the interior of this very beautiful Church was covered with white and yellow wash. The window jambs and mullions had been broken away, and repaired with plaster. The pier-arches and caps were so thickly coated with this material that there was hardly a possibility of guessing what might be buried under it.

The most important restorations in the Chancel have been the repairing the mullions, jambs, tracery and cills of all the

windows in the best possible way. Casing the splay and arch of the east window with freestone instead of the mortar and wash which was there before, and restoring the jamb moulding ; a work of no small labour, as it would seem that in the first instance a sufficient quantity of stone had not been worked, and the evil was remedied by wedging in the moulding with hard stone at the back, and leaving joints in front from two to three inches. In consequence of this it was so crippled and twisted that it was impossible to get it quite true without taking it to pieces, which would have been too dangerous an experiment. The cill was plastered up from the glass to the face of the wall ; it is now lowered and beveled so as to show a nosing, and is all of solid freestone.

The Sedilia have also been entirely restored, and the Piscina partially so.

The windows on the north and south sides have been restored, and three of the splays and arches cased with stone. A new floor of Nailsworth stone has also been laid in diamonds in the Chancel.

In removing the Altar-step, a mite of James I. was found under it, and also a piece of plaster with distemper painting on it, thus shewing that there had been some mutilation of the Church, and that it was since the beginning of James's reign. It gives plain proof also that the part most to be expected had been interfered with, viz. the arrangement of the Altar-steps, &c. Several encaustic tiles were also found under the floor.

Two large pews 6 feet 7 inches by 6 feet 3 inches, and 5 feet 4 inches high, on each side of the Chancel, have been removed and appropriate open stalls, with tracery, capping, and poppy-heads, looking north and south, have been placed in their room.

The Flamboyant window and all the windows in the South

aisle (except the east one) have been thoroughly restored in the stone work, as well as the nave arch.

The wash and plaster has also been removed from nearly all the piers, caps, and pier-arches, and the stone redressed, though by the inexperienced hand of an amateur.

A huge deal gallery, which entirely blocked up the western arch, and the two westernmost arches of the nave on the north and south sides, has been removed. The western arch, which was built up with bricks, and contained two stories of lofts entered by stairs and doors from the nave, has been opened so as to show the groining of the tower from the nave, and leave a clear view from the western door to the east window.

The south doorway has also been restored at the expense of the Bristol Architectural Society, and seventeen of the bold Early English flowers, which had been destroyed, have been replaced. There was a striking evidence of the inaccuracy with which good work was often done formerly in the arch of this doorway, as it had been worked from the springer on either side, and instead of meeting in the centre, one side was considerably lower than the other.

In process of restoring the Sedilia and the Priests' door some iron staples or eyes were found leaded into the wall immediately above the Priests' door. Their position gives rise to the notion that they were used for suspending drapery to form a temporary screen across the Altar.

On removing the plaster from the nave arch the ribs were plugged with oak pegs at regular intervals, it is presumed for the purpose of suspending lamps on certain occasions. The label had been cut away at the apex enough to admit the neck of a figure, and at corresponding distances on either side, it had been cut away as though to admit the shoulders. Both it and the pier-arches on the north side had been painted. The labels were entwined with a sash of Venetian red about

6 inches wide, and there was scarcely any other colour which had not been laid on the nave arch at some time or other. The foliage of the caps on the south side was painted but not the arches^b.

On the eastern side of the tower behind the gallery was an inscription commemorating a violent storm which happened in Nov. 1703, but so defaced that it was only possible to discover to what it alluded. On the back of the panelling of the gallery against the wall was also the following, "Nov. 27. 1703. Miserere etc."

MATERIAL.—The Church is built for the most part of top stone, or puff stone, as it is called in the neighbourhood of Dursley, where it is dug. The dressings are of free-stone and weather-stone from the adjoining hills.

Such then is the Church, such was it, and such are the efforts which have been made towards its restoration; nor can any more deserving object of such efforts be well conceived than this holy and beautiful House of God. And it is humbly submitted that those persons who spend so much of their time and talents in the endeavour to promote the public worship of God in the "Beauty of Holiness," could hardly do better than fix upon such a Church as this and make it complete in all respects, that it might be at once an example and a model for all the surrounding district.

For painful indeed are the feelings with which we are bound to record, that after all that has been done, for which we have every reason to be thankful to our Great Head, and all that has been expended (of which a short account will be given), the Church at this moment is not fit for the *Public Worship of Almighty God*. It is encumbered with pews of the dimensions given above, which, to say nothing of their un-

^b See Appendix.

sightly appearance and consequent destruction of all architectural beauty, render it impossible for the people to join with propriety in that Service which requires the devotion of the body on the *bended knee*, as well as the humiliation of the soul in reverent attention. The seats in these pews are so arranged that people sit all ways, and so little space is allowed, little more than 4 feet, that where the opposite seats are both occupied, kneeling is out of the question, and proper attention, not to say common decency, even when sitting or standing very difficult.

If it be asked why this evil has not been remedied, before other work, partially ornamental, was done; the answer is, that in the first place it is not possible to foresee at the commencement of a work how far it may proceed. Restorers are imperceptibly led on from one point to another till the work very far exceeds the original plan, and small beginnings eventually issue in very considerable completions. In the next place it is quite certain, that the first work to be done in the restoration of a Church is to repair the material and constituent parts of the fabric; and the stonework of windows, doors, &c. are among the first parts that demand attention. And, again, it would be plainly short-sighted to put useful and appropriately expensive work in the Church, when serious damage would be shortly inevitable both from the taking down and replacing heavy work, and from exposure to dirt and weather consequent upon it. On this last ground therefore we have especial reason to congratulate ourselves that so vast an undertaking as the rebuilding of the Clerestory and restoring the roof has been permanently accomplished, so that no inconvenience will again be experienced from the progress of such works as these. To those also who have the spiritual care of large parishes in the present day, as well as the desire of beautifying God's House, it will be a sufficient answer to any

such objection as is supposed above, that we must often be content to do what we *can* rather than what we *would*.

At the same time it is due to the principle on which all these restorations have been effected, to state that the pews were the very first evils which an effort was made to remedy, and that too before the general cry was raised against them, and that laudable crusade, which ever must call forth the grateful recollections of Churchmen, commenced by the Cambridge Camden Society. Nor have these efforts ever entirely slept, but causes which it is not desirable to make public, have prevented their being carried into execution. It is hoped however that no valid causes may any longer exist, to prevent this most desirable improvement, as soon as sufficient funds can be raised for the purpose. A glance at the plan of the Church will shew those acquainted with such matters, that it is somewhat difficult to arrange seats and kneelings in the form proper for a Christian Church. The floor of the nave and aisles is also in very bad condition, and the water-mould bases of the piers are at present bricked up, and no doubt are in bad condition, and will require considerable repair, as the impost of the Clerestory in the first instance has crushed the caps and piers on the north side to a great degree. There is no doubt but that they could be all substantially repaired with proper care, as they have stood many years, most likely centuries, without getting worse. Whenever the present pews are removed it would be desirable and necessary to put the piers, caps, and arches in thorough repair, they having only been partially restored : and indeed at the present time it is not possible to get at the piers. The interior of the Tower also requires a considerable expenditure to repair the breaches which have been made by trusses, beams, lofts, &c. and to make it sufficiently comely. The windows in the north aisle, except the Flamboyant, also require much labour to make them equal in appearance to the others that

have been restored. And all the corbel-heads in both aisles would well repay the labour and expense which would be requisite to remove the yellow wash from them and show them in their true features.

The porch and parvise also require much repair.

It remains to say a few words on the Church-yard, then we have done with this part of the account. It is a large Church-yard, and the Church, as is generally the case, is built near the southern side of it. The oldest graves and tombs are to be found on that side, which is as crowded as it can be. Whether the position of the Priests' door accounts for the partiality to one side of the Church-yard or the other, is a question on which Ecclesiologists might form a fair induction by a great number of instances. The writer of these pages commenced such an enquiry, but has not had the opportunity of visiting a sufficient number of Church-yards to give any thing like a fair opinion. The tombs give evidence of great expenditure, but as usual in very bad taste. Most of them are of that heavy and heathenish *table* kind, which convey a strong suspicion that they were placed there by the "eldest sons" for fear the original possessors of their property should ever rise up again. They number also among them some very profane and ridiculous epitaphs. A very successful attempt has however been made to introduce some of those ancient and Christian forms, as well symbolical of the faith of the departed, as instructive to those who are yet under the trials of the Cross.

The following short statement of the sum which has been expended in the restoration of this Church is given, not with any view to ostentation, but to shew that in soliciting contributions from those whom godly considerations may move to assist in restoring one of God's Houses, they who are most interested in it, have not been backward; that in a word

Charity has begun at home, but that if her influence is felt no farther than home, her work will be incomplete.

*Summary of Expenditure on the Restoration of
Slymbridge Church.*

	£	s	d
Paid to masons &c. for restoration of stonework in Chancel windows, Aisle windows, and nave-arch	70	0	0
To masons for Chancel floor, new cills to Chancel windows &c. &c.	23	0	0
For stalls in Chancel	35	0	0
For removing ringing loft &c. about	8	0	0
For new open oak roof to Clerestory	484	10	0
For eight new Clerestory windows, new cornice and parapet on Clerestory	170	0	0
For taking down and rebuilding Clerestory, working and fixing 12 new Angel-brackets &c. &c. &c.	87	0	0
Glazing new windows with cathedral glass, plumbing &c. &c.	31	10	0
Wages to labourers &c. &c.	6	10	0
Restoring south doorway	7	0	0
New altar-rails	8	0	0
Architect's commission and contingencies	58	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£988	10	0

If the above sum was stated at £1000 it would certainly be under the mark of the whole expenditure, as many items for tools, materials, and occasional labour are not included in it.

Towards the defraying of these expenses the following sums have been received.

Grant from the President and Fellows of St. Mary Magdalene College, Oxford	50	0	0
Donation from the Rev. Dr. Davies, Rural Dean	5	0	0
Ditto from persons resident in Slymbridge	8	10	0
Grant of Bristol Architectural Society	6	0	0
Donations by the Rev. R. G. Swayne	8	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£77	10	0

Thus leaving a balance of £911 to be defrayed wholly by the Rector of the parish.

It will be seen then that no money has been received from any Church-building Society, that no public appeal has hitherto been made, but it is humbly hoped that such an appeal will not now be unanswered, but that a sufficient sum may be obtained to carry out the restorations which have been begun, and to carry them out in a manner worthy of so beautiful a Church, and of the substantial costliness with which every thing has hitherto been done.

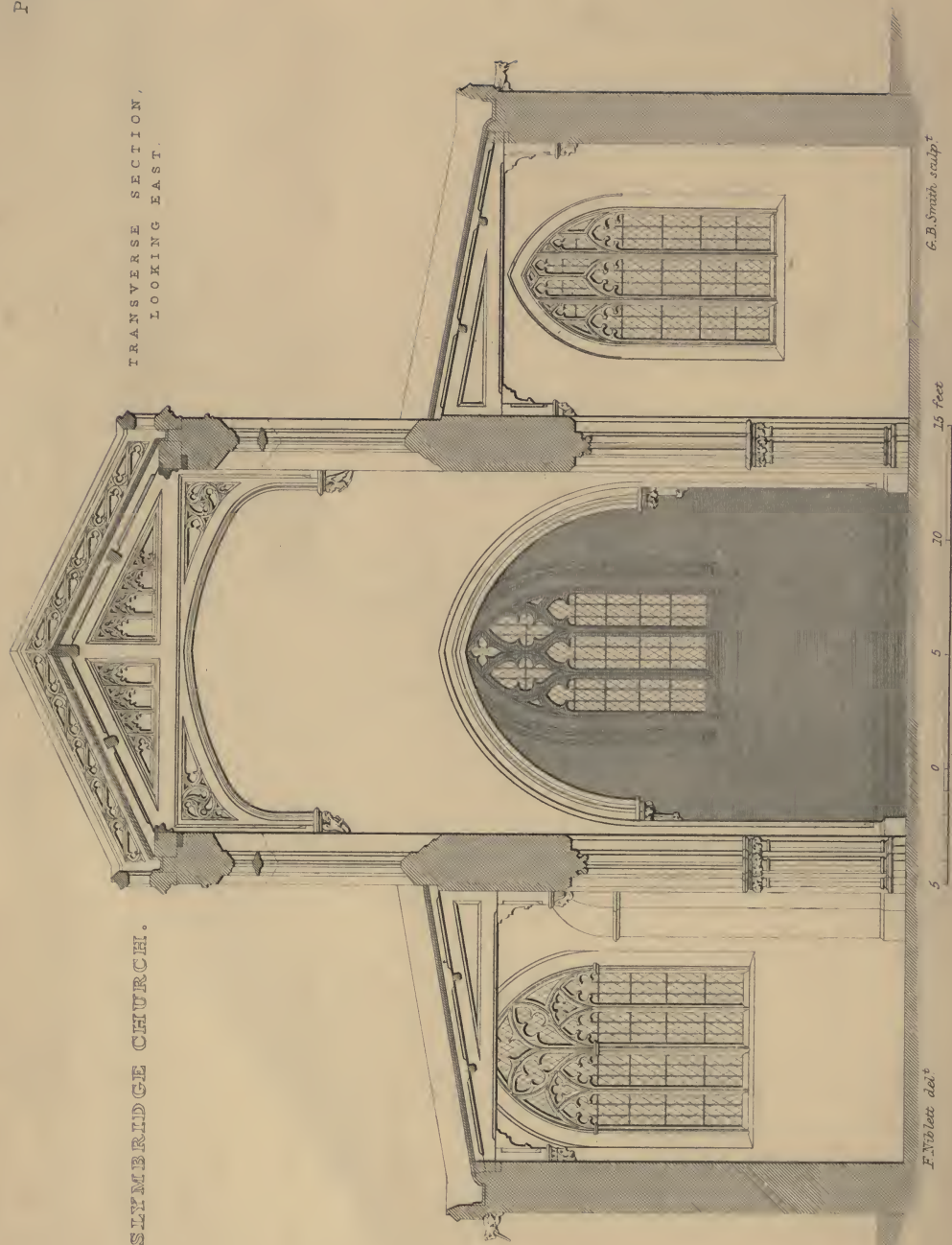
Not even were the drawbacks allowed by Government, according to their discretion, on the timber and glass used in the rebuilding the Clerestory, it being alleged as a reason that "no additional accommodation had been obtained in the Church." How accommodation can ever be obtained by placing new roofs and new windows in old Churches, a most necessary step to their preservation, is a problem not easy to solve: so that it would seem that that part of the Acts of Parliament which relates to the "*repairing*" of Churches must be understood to be null and void.

With a profound apology then for the trial of the readers' patience, if it has been exercised to this part of the account, we here beg to take our leave, hoping that the foregoing account, however imperfect, of this very beautiful Church may excite general interest in its favour, and so assist in completing what has been so satisfactorily commenced: hoping also that the spirit of our forefathers in expending their substance upon such goodly edifices, may fall upon, and remain with us, and that the account of the restorations of this Church under notice, may be of assistance to others engaged in similar works.



STAMBRIDGE CHURCH.

TRANSVERSE SECTION,
LOOKING EAST.



PARKER OXFORD 1845.

SLYMBRIDGE

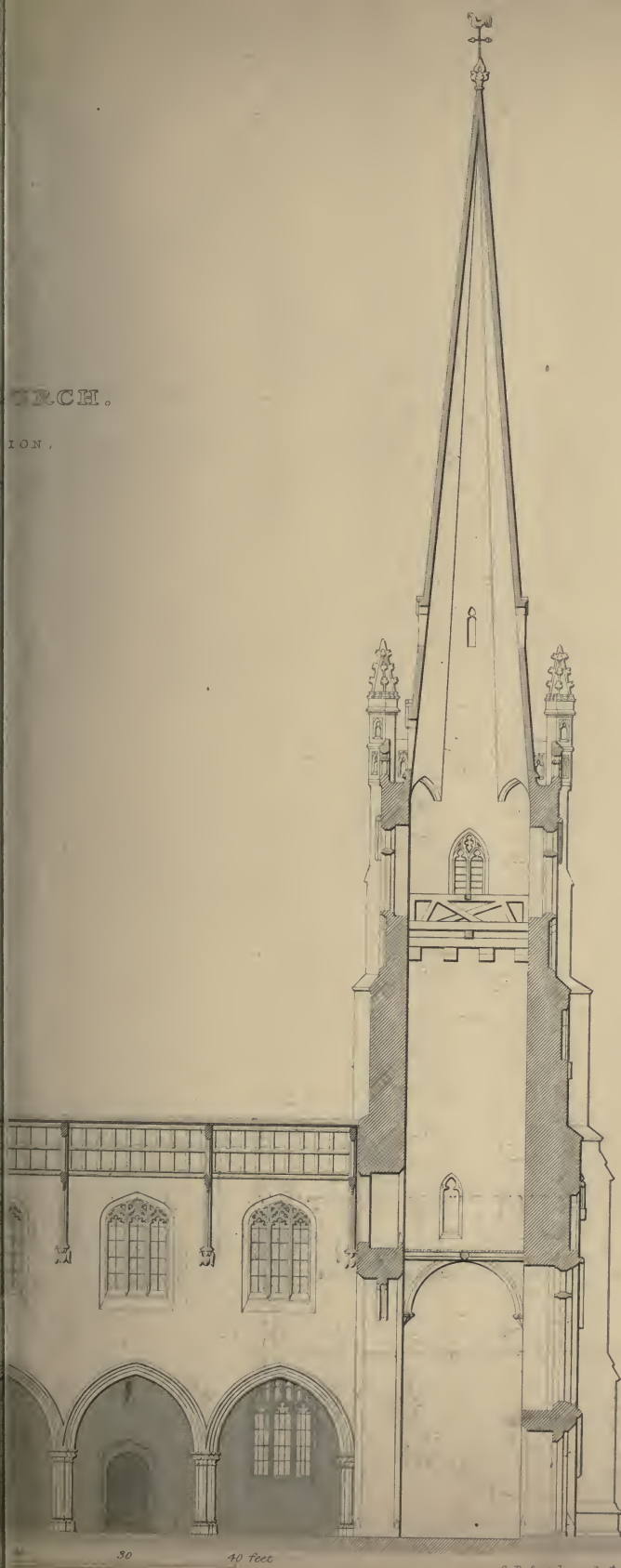
LONGITUDINAL SECTION

LOOKING SOUTH



ARCH.

ION,



G. B. Smith sculp^t

APPENDIX.

CONTAINING SOME REMARKS ON THE DECORATIVE COLOURING
OF CHURCHES AT THE PRESENT TIME.



APPENDIX.

It has seemed best to reserve to an Appendix the account of the Decorative Colouring, and Doom Picture, which has been discovered in the Church; with some observations on each, which necessarily force themselves on our notice.

The first discovery (about five years ago) of any thing like colouring, was on removing the yellow wash from the pier-arches on the north side of the nave, the labels of which were entwined with a sash of Venetian red, about six inches wide; and the soffits of the arches were coloured with green, black, and pink. This colour was not laid on the stone itself, but on a thin coat of white-wash, and it was impossible to preserve it, as it scaled off from the stone with the coats of wash that had been laid over it. On the south side of the nave, the piers and caps were coloured in the same manner, but not the arches. On removing the wash from the nave-arch it was found that the stone, on the western side, had been painted with oil paint; and though it was extremely difficult to clean it off, the oil having hardened the face of the stone, yet it was so mutilated, that it was not possible to preserve it in its primitive state, or even to discover what that state had been. The object, therefore, being to restore the stone, which is of a very beautiful nature, (of the character of Nailsworth or Boxwell,) to its own perfection, the daubing of paint (for such only were the remains) was entirely removed.

In the Autumn of 1844, when preparations were making for putting up the present roof on the Clerestory, on letting one of the runners for the scaffold into the western side of the wall above the nave-arch, signs of colouring were perceived; and on subsequently removing the plaster with all due care, a picture of distemper painting presented itself, of the following description:—

The group consists of five figures. In the centre, immediately over the apex of the arch, is a figure of our Blessed Saviour, seated on the rainbow, with the hands uplifted, and a nimbus round the head. On the right hand of this figure stands the Blessed Virgin, in a scarlet dress, fitting close to the person, with an ermine mantle flowing loosely behind her, and attached only at the neck. There is a nimbus round the head, but not the same as the one round the head of our Lord. Her left hand is raised. Immediately on her right is an Angel, with scarlet wings, kneeling at a Cross, over which is thrown the crown of thorns; the Passion nails are at the extremity of the arms, and at the foot of the Cross; and in the Angel's right hand is the hammer. On the left of our Lord is a figure erect, apparently that of St. John the Evangelist, though marked by no symbol, with nimbus round the head, and both hands raised. And on his left again, another Angel, with scarlet wings, completes the group, holding in the right hand the spear, and in the left two scourges, put saltire ways.

The outline of the top of the picture, if struck geometrically, would form a four-centred arch. The whole reaches very nearly across the width of the nave, and the height of each figure is three feet three inches.

A vivid impression came off on the plaster which had been laid over it, but not so much as to deface the outline or colour of the original, except in places where the wall had been pecked with an axe, to give the new plaster a firmer hold. The original is painted on plaster, laid over a rough wall. The date of it (from an accurate description) has been assigned, by those most conversant in such matters, to be about the commencement of the reign of Henry VII. (1485.)

What course may be pursued as to the preservation, or restoration, or temporary concealment of this picture, is still a matter of grave consideration, nor does it rest with the Editor of these pages to decide the question. It is at present the only painting of any kind on the walls of the Church; and it is certain there is none in the nave, as the whole of the plaster has been taken off in the course of the repairs, and no vestige of painting remained. There

is little doubt, however, but that the whole of the nave was painted; but the walls were entirely stripped some years back, and fresh plastered. It is reported by some old people that they have seen paintings in the south aisle, but these, most probably, have shared the same fate.

It is certain, then, that there has been in this Church two kinds of decorative colouring, but of what date is another matter. It may suffice, however, to classify all that is necessary for our present purpose, under the terms of Paintings and Pictures; the former designating all colouring, without any definite representation; the latter including all groups of figures, &c., whether symbolical or historical.

The question then is, whether it be advisable to have recourse to both or either of these methods of decoration in our Churches at the present day—and a very grave and serious question it is. And while it is not presumed that a satisfactory answer can be given to it here, yet many circumstances seem to render it allowable to offer a few observations on the subject.

On entering on any discussion of this question in a general way, it must be admitted, that all decoration of Churches, whether constructive or adventitious, is, and ever has been, *Symbolical*, and indicative of the spirit and feeling of the Church for the time being, and therefore naturally in accordance with the present circumstances of the Church.

Now, this being granted, it does appear to be a very serious question, whether the present is the time for painting and gilding our Churches. At the time when the Church, if not peculiarly under the harrows, is just emerging from a worse condition; it would seem that, however much we are bound to use every endeavour to extend Her circuit, and take care that She goes in solemn and costly attire, yet that the time is not come when we may clothe Her in that joyous and triumphant garb which, we fully trust, awaits Her, full wrought with gold purified in the fires of affliction.

There are few who would be disposed to deny the position that the Church at this time is labouring under, (we may hope also

through) difficulties, less only than those which She may have lately been delivered from. There is hardly a species of worldly oppression that is not practised upon Her. She groans in vain for Her own discipline within. She is stripped of many parts of Her ritual which are the only safeguard to reverence from without. She is bound to bear with the disobedience and backslidings of many who call themselves Her children. She is doomed to witness the schismatical breaches and gaps made by those who openly dissent from Her, without being able to exercise Her own power in filling them up. Nay, on the very point perhaps with which we are most nearly connected in an Architectural view, She is condemned to see Her worship conducted in the dirt and deformity instead of the beauty of holiness; and to see Her most sacred, and noblest, and most magnificent edifices waste in ruin, under the jangling litigation which defeats the ends of those laws which were framed to provide for their repairs. The weapons which were formed for Her defence are wielded by those in power against Her.

She has also, perhaps with still more self-reproach, to look forward to a work of extension, tremendous from accumulation, not merely to go on extending Her pale as Providence may see fit to allow, but to go back and repair the evils which the neglect of former years has gathered around Her.

Under such circumstances must not the heart of Her every true son feel an inward aching—does it not almost become him “to go heavily as one that *mourneth for his Mother?*”

And if She is just aroused to a sense of Her duty, is it well all at once to exhibit a triumphant spirit—is it well to assume such a garb as may dazzle the eyes of beholders, and make them fancy that She is now inwardly, what by gorgeous and gaudy decorations She appears without.

Those are not the *less expensively* clad who go in “mourning.” Nay, while it testifies our bereavement and our regret, it often causes a greater expenditure than we need otherwise be subject to. And at any rate it must cause a certain self-denial, by mortifying those worldly feelings of pride and vanity, which, judging from people’s usual attire, do but too evidently and too generally prevail.

We do not consider it any sign of *niggardliness*, when, during our penitential season of Lent, the crimson hangings of the Church are exchanged for the more solemn purple or black.

Would it not then better express the feelings of Churchmen to arrange and decorate our Churches at this time, in such a manner as may testify indeed our self-denial for Her and devotion to Her, but at the same time our deep regret for Her present bereavements, our humility and penitence for our former lack of service to Her. And if this be the case, the gravity and solidity of the natural stone when dressed to its greatest perfection, may perhaps best remind us of the weight of duty which rests upon us, and keeps us in that tone of mind which most becomes those who are struggling through dangers and difficulties partially, if not entirely, brought about by our own laxity and indifference.

But to descend a little to particulars. The building and decoration of our Churches must, as matter of course, depend much on the materials furnished by the particular districts in which they are built. And while it is undoubtedly the duty of all to render the best and most costly materials to God's service; and we cannot expect that God should approve and accept of any lower offering, yet it does appear from numerous examples (where we have no reason to doubt, but every reason to applaud and imitate the piety and devotion of our ancestors) that they considered their duty discharged, by building the House of God of the best materials which their own neighbourhood afforded. If the "mite" was all that good intention and self-denial could raise, that mite was considered an acceptable offering to God. And it is perhaps the most striking feature in Church Architecture, to observe how much some of the Churches, so plainly built, and whose details present the least possible interest, bear the same sacred stamp, and partake, on the whole, of the same Ecclesiastical character, as edifices of a more magnificent kind;—a feature most strongly contrasted with the miserable effect of the tawdry and deceptive attempts of modern days. Still it is but natural that the decoration of Churches (even with the highest regard to symbolism) should be regulated by the nature of the materials of which they are built. If for instance

nothing but flint, chalk, or rubble stones can be procured, something must be done to decorate the interior of Churches built of such materials. And, when forced to plaster, it does seem that nothing short of decorative colouring of some kind, and that too the best of its kind, can be admissible. And this not with any view to hiding or concealing the real materials, but as the only means of rendering them decent and comely.

Where, however, weather-stone and free-stone of the most beautiful kind can be obtained, as is the case in most counties in England (especially with the present facilities of carriage) and men can be found to work it in the most elaborate style, why should we not shew the beauties of creation in this particular, and the application of art as highly wrought, and as full of costly pains as any other can possibly be? Shall we compromise all our claim to taste and feeling if we ask the question, Whether any colouring can add to the beauty and richness of deeply moulded arches, and foliated capitals?

And again, with the very superficial and insufficient notions which the generality have in the present day with regard to sacrifices in God's service, is there not some danger, lest when we have gilded and painted the most costly materials to add to their costliness, the people should imagine it has been done to conceal defects, and thus the moral influence on the minds be lost or weakened?

With regard also to the distinctive features of *style* as contained in *mouldings* and the character of *foliage*, it would seem that these must be considerably obliterated, by the general adoption of decorative colouring. And on this head it seems of some importance to consider, whether the system of painting did not obtain more extensively in this country, as Ecclesiastical Architecture began to decline, and the whole character of mouldings and enrichments extended only to the surface, instead of being carried in deep receding shadow, as in the earlier styles.

Thus far these observations (not worthy of being called arguments) may pass for some hints as to the moral influences of the system if introduced in the present day, and its necessary connection with materials.

But suppose for a moment it be admitted that nothing but blank walls should be coloured, and that even where these are built of the most costly materials, yet as we are bound to press the best of every art into God's service, we should add this one of decorative colouring—confessedly the sister of that most sublime one, Music, which all of proper feeling admit to belong in its highest and most exalted degree to God's service. We are then launched forthwith into the question of the proper *method* of decoration, and we come at once to the distinction laid down above, between Paintings and Pictures.

Now as to the first we have Canonical authority for writing on the walls "chosen sentences." (Canon 82.) And we may well be at a loss to know how it is that this authority has of late years been so generally disregarded. We may clearly multiply these sentences to any number, are at liberty to write them in any manner we please, whether by illuminating, rubricating on scrolls, or otherwise, and of course may enrich them by enclosing them in appropriately decorated borders. And it does seem in the first place, that this is the only kind of painting for which we have real authority; and in the next, that there is no way in which the "Petrefaction of our Religion" can be made in the same degree to reflect the true Spirit of our Holy Catholic Faith.

But if it be said that this is not employing the highest degree of the art, and that Pictures alone can be said to be so, representing historical parts of Scripture, and realizing as it were to people's minds some of the most important and awful truths of Revelation, we then meet with a question of such general difficulty, that it can be solved only in each particular case.

We will first of all grant at once, that there is a certain and large class of people who must be taught through their *senses*, and that as many of them cannot read, a good picture on a solemn subject, with pure Ecclesiastical tone and tint, would read them a better lecture, and make more lasting impression on their minds than they could derive in any other way. It is indeed to encourage such a serious tone of mind that, *as regards man*, we decorate our Churches at all. Our piers, crowned with foliage and fruit, with

their pointed arches supporting the superstructure as it were with prayerful hands—our windows glowing with the good deeds of departed Saints—our high pitched roofs, where Angels lead us to contemplative darkness—our vaulted ones reminding us of Heaven's canopy—our more depressed ones with their king-posts and upright tracery still pointing heavenwards—all are to keep us in mind of man's unworthiness and God's glory—that we are in God's House and God's Presence on earth, and are aspiring to His Church triumphant in Heaven.

But when it comes to representing truths of Scripture by pictures, we must be certified that there is nothing in the execution which shall cause any other than a holy feeling—that, in a word, it must not only be the best of the art, but that it must be a much higher order of art than is employed in any secular painting. And with regard to the subject itself to be represented, the question, as we said, is fraught with difficulty, and it is clear that nothing less than the authority of the Ordinary on every special occasion, can be a safeguard against the danger of representing objectionable subjects, or representing them in an objectionable manner.

As to any general Ecclesiastical authority for this kind of painting we know of none, and the only expression of the Church's feeling on the subject, in Her Homily, seems rather against it. Whether She has differed from Catholic Christendom in Her opinion on this particular is a subject which must be left to Canonists to determine.

As to the authority from antiquity we speak rather doubtfully, because not sufficiently informed on the point, when we say that the decorating of our Churches by pictures was the custom of the worst ages, those ages in which the Church was well-nigh overwhelmed with the tide of superstition, and corrupted by the influences of false doctrine.

These suggestions are not offered, as by the artist, or the antiquary, or the architect, but as by a Churchman, and simply with regard to Ecclesiastical propriety. And it is hoped that it will not be considered presumptuous to say, that while Architectural Com-

mittees can calmly and composedly reason on the abstract propriety of a thing, and the weight of authority on which it should be done, the humbler, and, on such subjects, more ignorant parish Priest, who is mixed up with all classes of people, and whose zeal for scientific pursuits is tempered by the difficulties he finds in carrying them out into action, may sometimes be a better judge as to the moral effect they are likely to produce. It has been precisely such a state of things that has given rise to the above observations.

On the whole, then, we should say, ere we *introduce* at the present time the system of gorgeous decoration in our Churches, let us struggle that the true spirit of the Church may be carried out in all Her Ritual. Let Her Priests be clothed with the proper vestments, and if the walls of our Churches are to glow with polychrome, let the hearts of our people, glow with *daily* devotion ; if the whole tone of our Church be joy and triumph, let it be chastened by the declaration from Her Altar, and the observance by Her people, of the seasons of fasting and abstinence. Let Her Ministers not rest till they have done every thing in their power obediently to discharge their obligations as Priests, and let them not think to compound for this lack of service by the easier method of decorating Churches, lest they make them like whited sepulchres, glowing and gorgeous in themselves, while the hearts of the people are cold, and full of cankering disobedience.

It is only necessary to add that these remarks, contemptible in the eyes of some, and perhaps unpalatable to others, are offered merely as heads for general and more mature consideration, and as setting forth difficulties which seem not to have been contemplated in many quarters. They are not written with any notions of niggardliness or worldly expediency, but with the spirit that utterly abhors the principle of sacrificing to God of that which costs us nothing.

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